EBEN-EZER:

OR,

Profitable Truths after Peſtilential Times.

Being ſome

MEDITATIONS

Upon *ISAIAH* 4. 2.

SHEWING

The MERCY and the DUTY

Of Thoſe that have Eſcap'd the

Slaughtering Peſtilence.

As alſo,

That all Slaughter ſhall end in the Exaltation of CHRIST, and the ſetting up of HIS KINGDOM.

Together with

An Epiſtolary Preface

To the Citizens of *London* & *Weſtminſter*.

By THOMAS BLAKE.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Citizens of LONDON and WESTMINSTER:

A few Things are humbly offered, needful to be considered.

SIRS,

N this day of the Lords Controverſie, a Cup of trembling hath been put into your hands, and you have drank deep of it: Such Slaughters rarely, if ever, have been within your Walls ſince their Foundations were firſt laid. The memorable year of *Twenty Five*, muſt not be compar'd with *Sixty Five*, either for the number of the Slain, the continuance of the Viſitation, or ſuch unwonted reiterated Increaſes and Decreaſes: And O that ſuitable to the dread of the Diſpenſation, Effects might be wrought upon all your Hearts! that the Lord may be pacified towards you, and may not add to this Plague ſeven other and worſe Plagues. You are now comforting your

Hearts with thoughts that *the bitterneſs of Death is paſt*; your Trade will return, and the Cloud that hath darkened your glory and ſplendor will vaniſh: To which I heartily ſay, *Amen*; the Lord do ſo. But if I thought it would be born, and kindly received, I would take leave to tell you, I have my fears; fears not bottom'd upon βεβήλους καὶ γραώδεις μύθους, as the Apoſtles expreſſion is, 1 *Tim.*4.7. *profane and old Wives fables*; but upon Conſiderations (as I judge) more ſolid: An account of which, be pleaſed to take in a few words.

Firſt, Cities every way famous have had their Periods: all worldly glory carrieth decaying Principles in its bowels. It may, as the Sun, go forth in its beauty and ſtrength until it climb to its Meridian, and thenceforward it will decline until its luſtre ſet in obſcurity. As they ſay of the World, ſo of Cities, they have their *Youth* and *Manhood*, in which they are in their ſtrength and vigour; and after that, *Old Age*, until they return to the duſt out of which they were raiſed. *Tyre*, a City of ſtrength, called *the ſtrong City*, Joſh.19.29.

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an ancient and enriching City; yet from the Lord went forth a Commandment to destroy it, *Isa.* 23. 11. *Babylon*, once the Metropolis of a mighty Empire, and consequently stood upon suitable advantage-ground for its security; yet could not bear up it self against that Sentence, *Isa.* 14. 4. *Thou shalt take up this Proverb against the King of Babylon, and say, How hath the Oppressor ceased? the golden City ceased?* Ceased to *be*, as well as to *oppress*: It is the destiny of some, that when they cease to *oppress*, they must cease to *be* also. *Jerusalem*, the beloved City, honour'd by the King of Heaven (that Fountain of all true Honour) against her cries the Prophet, *Isa.* 3. 8. *Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen.* God commands and threatneth concerning *Tyrus*, Ezek. 26. 4. *Break down her Towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and leave her like the top of a Rock:* not so much as any Monument should remain. *Jam sedes est ubi Troja fuit.* Others their memory is perished, *Psal.* 9. 6. *Thou hast destroyed Cities, their memorial is perished with them.*

Secondly, Sins & great Provocations have been precedaneous unto, and the procuring Causes of the ruine of Cities. God is known to be long-suffering to all among whom he is known; he doth not strike, much less destroy, without a cause, nor yet for every cause: God can bear long, yet will he not bear always. Wickedness may in places of eminency, as Diseases in the Body, lurk up and down for a season, till by continuance they grow strong, seiz the Vitals, and down goes the House of Clay. Sin drowned the old World, and burnt *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*; and they are left upon record, as Examples of Divine Vengeance, to put a restraint upon the exorbitancies of sinful Cities. Every publick sin of Cities, as they are a Body and Community, or the sin of them that are the visible owned authority in them, acting as such, is a stroke at their Foundations, and many such may soon level them with the ground. There are Prognosticks of decaies & approaching *Death*, not onely in the Natural, but in Bodies Politick also. The Death-Marks upon

Cities

Cities of old, have been such as these:

1. Pride: *God resisteth the Proud,* is true concerning a *Nation, City,* or *Man.* It it was *Moabs* height that laid him low: *We have heard of the pride of Moab, he is exceeding proud; therefore shall Moab howl, for the foundations of Kirhareseth shall ye mourn,* Isa. 16.6. *Tyrus* said, *I am of perfect Beauty,* Ezek. 27.3. thence was she defaced, and brought to nothing.

Felicissima——
Dicta foret——si non sibi visa fuisset.

2. Oppression; especially oppression and cruelty towards the Lords own People: *Wo to the oppressing City,* Zeph. 3.1. *Rev.* 18.21. *With violence shall that great City Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all:* and why so? that follows, vers. 24. *In her was found the Blood of Prophets, and of Saints, and of all that were slain upon the Earth.* God will make inquisition for Blood, especially for the Bloood of his *Abels,* that will cry; all that have had their hands in it, call themselves by what name of distinction they will, will be found to be Brats of *Babylon,* and they

and their Cities may fall thereby. One of the great Sins that came up into remembrance against *Tyre* and *Zidon*, was this, *The Children of Judah and the Children of Jerusalem have ye sold to the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border*, Joel 3.6.

3. Treachery and Unfaithfulness: *Amos* 1.9. *For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they dilivered up the whole Captivity of Edom, and remembred not the Brotherly Covenant.*

4. False-Worship: *Jer.* 19.11. *I will break this City as one breaketh a Potters Vessel that cannot be made whole again; and they shall bury in Tophet till there be no place.* In *Tophet* they sinned in their corrupt Worship, and there they must fall by this their iniquity. Certainly wo to them who after Light received, and solemn Covenants made, dare to corrupt the Worship of God, and defile the Sanctuary with their detestable things; wo to them, whether Persons or Places.

5. The baseness of pretended spiritual men:

men: There is a wo againſt *Jeruſalem*, Zeph. 3. 1. and why? *Her Prophets are light and treacherous Perſons; her Prieſts have polluted the Sanctuary, they have done violence to the Law*: HER Prophets and Prieſts, ſaith God, not MINE; ſome of their own making: they do wickedly, and would wreſt the the Word, and labor to make it ſpeak for their abominations.

6. Contempt of the Goſpel: This evidently was *Jeruſalems* undoing; *They killed the Prophets, and ſtoned them that were ſent unto them*; and upon a ſuppoſition and hope to preſerve their worldly intereſt, they ſet themſelves againſt Chriſt himſelf, *Joh.* 11. 48. *If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans will come and take away our Place and Nation.* This their deſign proved abortive; that which they intended for the promoting of their carnal ends, let in the Enemy upon them like a flood, to the utter ruine of them and their City. Never yet did any ſell a Goſpel to gain a Trade, but ran an eminent hazard of ſelling themſelves into ruine and miſery.

7. In-

7. Incorrigibleness: *Jerusalems* scum went not out of her, as the Prophet complains: *A fire was kindled under her*; she was in distress, but yet sin was not purged out: She received not correction, as it is expressed, *Zeph.* 3.1. Judgments are Gods last Remedy, if they do no good, the Patient must die, without a miracle of *mercy*.

Thirdly, Sins have been the ruine of Cities, by their turning God to be against them: So long as a *People* or *Place* can say, *The LORD is with us*, they stand firm. *God* is the *Rock* of *Persons*, *Cities*, and *Nations*; if they sell or forfeit their *Rock*, he will also sell them, or *give them into the hands of spoilers*. A *People* and *Places* that *God* has wrought for, must not suppose the presence and care of *God* so entaild upon them, that he will stand by them, be it right or wrong. If they turn their backs upon *God*, cast off the thing that is good, serve their lusts, seek themselves, scoff at Holiness, tread his People in the dirt, pervert all Equity and Right, call evil good, and good evil, put darkness for light, and light for darkness; *God* will also turn *himself*

ſelf againſt ſuch, and fight againſt them as an Enemy: Wo to them that have God againſt them! *Wo unto them when I depart from them*, ſaith *God*, Hoſ. 9. 12. *Jeruſalem*'s doom was, *Saith the Lord God, behold I, even I, am againſt thee, and will execute Judgements in the midſt of thee.* It is a great vanity in ſome, who when they have provoked *God* to his face, and done evil even to the uttermoſt they can, do imagine the breach may be repair'd with a little feigned Humiliation, upon whom that Text looks very ſadly, *Jer.* 14. 12. *When they faſt, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer Burnt Offering and an Oblation, I will not accept them: but I will conſume them*, &c. Sometimes *God* is ſo turned againſt *Cities*, that he will not accept of the mediation of his *People* for them, and this was the caſe in the Text but now cited, v. 11. God ſaith to *Jeremiah*, *Pray not thou for this People.* God, when turned againſt *Jeruſalem*, ſaith to *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody City:* ſome render it, *An cauſam ageres, an cauſam ageres Civitatis iſtius?* Wilt thou plead for that City? No,

No, saith God, thou shalt not set upon such lost labour. *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, can sometimes onely deliver their own Souls. *God Almighty* keep his *Noahs*, *Daniels*, *Jobs*, whatever may be the lot of others.

Fourthly, There is no fence against Divine Displeasure; nothing can be a security to that place against which God is turned. *Jerusalem* was once supposed to be impregnable; hence when *David* went to take it, they set the *blind and lame to keep* it, as a Guard conceived sufficient to defend it from all Assaults; yet was it trodden down, when God armed an Enemy against it. *Tyrus* was wasted in the day of *Gods displeasure*, although rich and strong in Shiping, and what else might be accounted the strength of a place.

Fifthly, God wants not ways to lay Cities low, if his Mind be engaged against them: He may possibly not do it all at once, but he can do it *gradatim*, by degrees: He saith of *Tyrus*, *Bring it out piece by piece*, *Ezek.* 24.6. The remains after one Judgement, he can take off by another; What

What ſurvives the Peſtilence, may fall by the Sword and Famine.

And great is the Equity of God in dealing thus with *Cities* and places of *eminency*. They are the Heads from whence other places receive influence. If ſin abound in Cities, it is from them propagated thorow all places that have commerce with them, or depend upon them. It is ſaid of *Babylon*, *Rev.* 17.1. *The Kings of the Earth and Inhabitants of the Earth have been made to drink of the wine of her fornication.*

Should you now put the queſtion to me, that the People once did to *Ezekiel*, *Wilt thou tell us what theſe things are to us?* My Anſwer is, Be you faithful to your ſelves, and compare your ſelves with what I have laid before you, and ſo may you come to inform your ſelves how far theſe things concern you. What your ſins are, you know, or may know: You have been and yet are under the Rod. Under your Glory a burning is kindled, I wiſh it may be extinct ere it conſume both Root and Branch.

Three things there are, that ſpeak for you;

you; I wish they may out-cry your Provocations.

1. There are many among you in whom the Lord takes pleasure, however they are by some lightly esteemed.

2. You have been a Refuge to the Needy in their distress: What day you cease so to be, you will augment my fears, and perhaps your dangers also.

3. Some among you have lately with chearfulness received the Gospel.

Certain it is, your Rowers have brought you into *Great Waters*, as the Prophet speaks, *Ezek.* 27.26. God Almighty work you to a repenting broken frame, that the Lord may repent him of the Evil. *Nineveh* had perished, had they not put on their Sackcloth. The Lord humble you for Crying Sins, and give you New Spirits, that you may not go on in ways of Provocation. A part of what is your present Duty, the following Treatise may possibly give you a little light into. I have used freedom and plainness with you; let it not be to me according to that Old Saying, *Obsequium Amicos, veritas odium parit.* I am satisfied in what I have written, having a witness in my self: I desire not the woful day, but am among the number of

Your hearty Well-wishers,

Thomas Blake.

To the READER.

READER,

Apologies for appearing in publick are so common, and sometimes so full of vanity, that they create suspitions of Pride and Vain-glory in the spirits of men, rather then remove such stones of stumbling: I shall therefore leave my integrity in this Undertaking to Him whose prerogative it is to try the spirits. Onely know, Having upon some ground published something at the beginning of this Calamity, I thought it not amiss to follow it with some suitable Word, now we are (as is hoped) drawing towards a period of this sore slaughter: Be assured I shall not any more for ever trouble the World with any thing in this way, unless upon some special occasion and more then ordinary Call.

My design in the whole is to speak something, that Saints may know their Duty, being escaped; and to bear up their hearts under the sad thoughts of past, and what future slaughters may be: and to commend Saintship to Sinners, that they may be desirous to get into that number. I have avoided affected strains and Jingles, that sound of words, (which in my apprehension are but dead flies, that corrupt the Boxes of otherwise precious Ointment) that the design may be heeded more then the expression, and have sought to speak something that may be suitable to every case. I have not much more to adde. Onely,

1. *If*

1. *If what I have written fall into the hands of any in any place not reached by the hand of God this day; Remember the cup doth many times go round, your turn may yet be to come: Be not secure.*

2. *Let none be discouraged, though you see no sudden wished effects of the slaughter the Lord hath made; God is in his way, and will do his work with sober speed: He could have made the World in one hour, but took six days for it. God saith of* Zidon, Ezek.28.23,24. He will execute Judgments in her, he will send into her Pestilence, and Blood in her streets, and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her, by the Sword on her, on every side: *The issue of this?* Vers.28. There shall be no more a pricking Brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving Thorn of all that are round about them, that despise them. *The Promise is true, Faith and Patience is our work.*

3. *If thou art a Soul that knowest the Plague of thine own Heart, and art in some measure delivered from it, thou hast enough, and God will bear thee in his Arms, and bring thee to himself, however things may be in the World.*

I have this onely to request of thee, That thou wouldst look this little Piece through, and if one page suit not thy case, another may. If it serve thy spiritual Welfare in any measure, Give God the Glory, and beg that he may feel the power of all Truth upon his heart, which he recommends to thee, and is thine to serve thee for Jesus sake.

T. B.

EBEN-EZER:

Or, Some

MEDITATIONS

Upon ISAIAH 4. 2.

In that day ſhall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the Fruit of the Earth ſhall be excellent and comely, for them that are eſcaped of Iſrael.

THat you may have a little light into theſe words, it will be expedient to conſider two things: 1. What we are to underſtand by the *Branch of the Lord*, and *the fruit of the Earth*; and 2ly. To what Time and what Perſons theſe words do relate. As for the former, you ſhall find in Scripture

there is one who is called *the Branch*, Zac. 6. 12. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the* BRANCH; and Zac. 3. 8. *For behold, I will bring forth my Servant the Branch:* in these Scriptures, and also in the Scripture I am upon, by *Branch* we are to understand Jesus Christ; and that we are to take Christ to be thereby intended, is evident from Jer. 23. 5, 6. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judgement and Justice in the Earth; in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is his Name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness,* or *Jehovah our Righteousness:* He that is *the Lord our Righteousness*, is this *Branch*, and that is certainly the Lord Jesus: He is called *the Branch of the Lord* upon the account of his Divine Nature, that he is the Son of God, the onely begotten of the Father, that lay in his Bosom from Eternity; as also because he was a Branch growing out and appearing in his glory and splendour, before the Sons of Men, by the appointment and Decree of the Father.

As for the *Fruit of the Earth*, who may that be? You find sometimes in Scripture, Jesus Christ is said to be *a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, and a Branch growing out of his Roots*, Isa. 11. 1. *And there shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem*

of

of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his Roots; He is so called upon account of his humane Nature; as he is Man, he is of the Seed of *David*, and upon the same score he is here termed the *Fruit of the Earth*; Christ, the Branch of the Lord, as he is Man, is of earthly extract and Original; Man is of the Earth, and Christ as Man, is made of the same mould with the rest of the Children of Men; he was made Man, and being of the Seed of the Woman, he is here called *the Fruit of the Earth*. Thus much for answer to the first Enquiry, Who is meant by the *Branch of the Lord*, and *the Fruit of the Earth*.

Secondly, To what Time and Persons do these Words refer? For there is a certain time unto which these words have relation; *in That day*; in what day is that? it is a day of slaughter, a day of great calamity; for it refers unto the end of the foregoing Chapter without all dispute: in the 25 and 26 Verses it is said, *Thy men shall fall by the Sword, and thy mighty in the war, and her Gates shall lament, and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground*: it relates to a time when much slaughter should be made, slaughter to a desolation, when men should be exceedingly weeded out of the Earth, then *shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the Fruit of the Earth excellent and comely*. If that be the issue of Desolation, we

need the less matter it. But unto what Persons doth this word relate? I answer primarily, unto the Jewish People, and unto those among them that should survive and out-live the Calamities that do befall them; it relates unto the surviving People among the Jews: *The Branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the Fruit of the Earth excellent and comely, for them that escape*, and them that escape of *Israel*: It relates, secondarily (I suppose) and may indifferently have some respect to all the People of God; or more largely, to all those unto whom the Gospel of Christ shall come, and they be thereby prevailed upon: as *Israel* in Scripture was a name unto all the Jewish Nation unto whom the Oracles of God were committed, and they owned a subjection to them; so it may have respect unto all in all times of the Gospel, brought over to Christ, who falling under sore Calamities, have this grace allowed them, to survive and out-live those days of distress. This may serve to give light into the words; and two Truths I would note from them, which lie fairly in them, and which I judge as pertinent unto the present circumstances under which we fall, as any in any one Scripture that I know of in the Book of God.

Doctr. 1. *That it is a proper issue and a good effect of slaughtering-Judgement, upon them that have*

have escaped the slaughter, to have Christ become glorious and excellent unto them. And

2. *That the issue of all those dreadful destroying Judgements that shall break forth in the world, shall be the putting of glory upon the head of Christ, and that glory upon Christ shall be to the good and benefit of those of Israel that shall escape the slaughter.*

I shall begin with the first, namely, *That it is a good issue of Slaughtering-Judgements, upon them that out-live such calamities, that Christ is become glorious and excellent in their accounts:* The Words do certainly relate to a Time of great slaughter, such a slaughter that *Jerusalem* (which was once a very populous City) and the places of the greatest concourse in it, which were the Gates (for in the Gates Justice was executed, and thither was a confluence of persons from all parts) but such should be the slaughter that her Gates should lament, and mourn, and become desolate; at this time there were some should escape, (God useth to have a remaining Remnant when his displeasure is at highest) and what should this sad Judgement work upon them that should remain? The Branch of the Lord should become glorious among them: You read in the 78 *Psalm*, vers. 34, 35. *When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned, and enquired early after God, and they remembred that God was their*

Rock, and the high God their Redeemer: When he slew them, that is, when he came forth with slaughtering Judgements, as he did sometimes against *Israel*; and particularly, God smote them with Plagues more then once: now what did they that remained and were left alive do? they began to have more high and awful thoughts of the Lord then before, the esteem of him was a little raised in their hearts; *they remembred he was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer*; thus far they went well, onely that which followeth spoiled all; in vers. 36, 37. *Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant:* if really the esteem of the Lord had been raised in their hearts, they had been an excellent People, and the Lords Judgements had wrought kindly. You shall find the Lord complains for the want of such a spirit in *Hos.* 11. 7. God called there to the People, and how? He called by mercy; *I drew them with the cords of a man, with the bands of love*, vers. 4. that is, I treated them kindly; he called them by Judgements, as you see in vers. 6. *The Sword shall abide on his Cities, and shall consume his Branches, and devour them*; what did God expect should be the answer unto his Call, and the fruit of all his Dispensations? it was that they should have exalted him, honoured

noured him, and admired him at a greater rate then before? but because they did not, God took it ill, and reckoned that his Providences had not a kindly reception among them. *Psal.* 2.6. *Yet* (says he) *have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion*; which words are not onely a Prophecy concerning that Kingdom Christ shall have, but declarative of that Kingdom he hath, *viz.* his Providential Kingdom, by which he manages and governs affairs in the World; now in the management of it what doth he do? sometimes, as in vers. 9. he *rules them with a Rod of Iron, and dashes in pieces like a Potters Vessel*; but what should they do that should out-live such Providences? you shall see the Fruit that should grow upon this Root, *Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way*; Christ expects when he is abroad with his Iron Rod, and dashing Earthen Vessels to pieces, as he hath this day, they that stand on their feet not dashed to pieces, as others of the same mould, he expects higher thoughts of himself, and to be more esteemed by them; and if he fail of his expectation, let them remember that they are but Clay, and therefore in the way, not out of danger. *Jer.* 51.50. *Ye that have escaped the Sword, go away, stand not still; remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind:* God was abroad with the Sword, it may be the material Sword, and it

may be with such a Sword of the Angel as he hath lately been cutting withall; what should the Escaped do? Remember the Lord: Remember him, you will say, what is that? Give me leave to open it unto you a little, because I shall use the term again anon; To *remember the Lord*, implies two things among others:

1. To have the heart wrought up into the fear of the Lord, to sanctifie his Name; *Remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy*; that is, sanctifie the Sabbath: so remember the Lord, that is, fear him, let his Name be great, his honour be dear unto thee. *Remember thy Creator*; what is that? it is, Give up thy self unto the Lord, remember who he is, and what he is, and what he calls for from thee: when a People sin against the Lord, they are said to *forget* him many times; so suitably to *remember* him, is to fear him, to honour him, and lift up his Name.

2. To *remember the Lord*, is to love and delight in him, to have a great esteem of him; as the Lord saith, *Jer.*31.20. *Is Ephraim my dear Son? is he a pleasant Child? since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him:* Gods remembring *Ephraim*, was his love to and delight in *Ephraim*; so our remembring the Lord, is our loving of and delighting in him: and this is the frame that should be found upon the hearts of them that escape sore Calamities, To fear and mag-

magnifie, to love and delight in him: This indeed is a right Spirit, and it is called for elsewhere, *Ezek.6.9. And they that escape of you shall remember me among the Nations whither they shall be carried Captives:* Time was when *Israel* had few and slight thoughts of God their Redeemer, but when GOD had been at work among them by severe strokes, those that did escape of them, their Spirits should be much amended, much altered for the better; they should come and love him and fear him, so as they did not before: So *Isa.*10.20. *And it shall come to pass in that day*; what day was that? a day of great slaughter: for, vers.19. *The rest of the Trees of his Forrest shall be few, that a Child may write them*; a Child that is but a bad Arithmetician should be able to number them that should remain, the smallness of them should be such: *It shall come to pass, that the Remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the holy One of Israel in truth:* staying upon the Lord, is an Act of Faith, and Acts of Faith do greatly glorifie Christ, and speak the Heart much delighted in him; if thou be'st not taken with him, thou wilt never act Faith upon him: But this was the Fruit that this escaping Remnant should bring forth, and is that which God expects from *preserved ones* in a day of *slaughter.*

All

All this confirms the Truth I have been driving at; and in the profecution of it, I ſhall propoſe two things to be ſpoken to:

1. To ſhow what Engagement there lieth upon them that eſcape in a day of ſlaughter, to be thereby led unto an eſteem of Chriſt; why it ſhould render this *Branch of the Lord*, and *Fruit of the Earth*, beautiful and glorious in their eyes.

2. When thoſe that do eſcape may conclude their eſcaping hath this iſſue and effect upon their Souls. And

3. Try what Improvement we may make of this Truth.

Firſt, How doth our eſcaping in a time of Calamity, lay an engagement upon the heart to prize and value Chriſt the more? I ſuppoſe it is very natural; I would evidence it in four or five things.

1. Chriſt hath the management of all Providences, and ſurely then of ſuch as theſe; a Sword goeth not thorow a Land, nor a Plague thorow a City, Country, or Town, but Chriſt hath a great hand in it: *Joh.3.35. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand*; the Father out of his great love unto his Son, and confidence he hath in him, that he will do nothing but what is well, hath committed the management of all Providences into his hands; he hath given him the power of life and

and death in the World, and where he will he ſpares, and where he will he ſlayes: the People of God (repreſented under the notion of the two Witneſſes) it is ſaid of them, that they have a kinde of power to kill People as they will, *Rev.* 11.6. *Theſe* (meaning the two Witneſſes) *have power to ſhut Heaven, that it rain not in the days of their Prophecy, and have power over Waters, to turn them into Blood, and to ſmite the Earth with Plagues as often as they will*; but their power is but in a way of Prayer; through the great intereſt they have in the Lord, and his Chriſt, they can do much, and carry a great ſtroke for or againſt a People: But now the power of Chriſt is abſolute, he can do and govern in this matter as he pleaſeth; and why hath he this power? look *Joh.* 5.22,23. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgement unto the Son*: by *judging* here, I humbly conceive, Ruling and Government, ordering and diſpoſing of things in the World, is intended, which the Father doth not do without, but by the Son; the matter is left unto him, and why? *That all men might honour the Son even as they honour the Father*; therefore is this Government committed unto the Branch of the Lord, that it might gain him the more eſteem: We that have ſeen ſo much of Chriſt in theſe his Diſpenſations, ought it not to have this effect upon our *hearts*, to teach us to *honour the Son as we honour the Father*? Eſpecially, 2.

2. Considering, That that Escape which you and I have in a day of Calamity, it is through the Son; if thou do'st escape, this Branch of the Lord hath a great hand in it; however we may rob Christ of his honour, and attribute it unto second Causes, yet indeed and in truth, the matter is in Christs hand: You read of a Retiring-Chamber for the People of God in days of Calamity, *Isa.*26.20. *Come my People, enter into your Chamber, and shut the doors about you, hide your selves for a little moment, until my indignation be over-past:* Are there Retiring-Chambers in the day of Gods Controversie, when he comes to contend, and smite down unto the Earth? I might ask the question, Where are they? and say as *David*, Psal.139.7, *&c. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? if I ascend up into Heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me:* where may a man be hid in the day of Gods anger? I would say, Retire into Christ, he is a Rock of shelter, he is the *Munition* of *Rocks* where the Soul shall be hid, it is the man Christ Jesus shall be a *Covert from the storm, a hiding place in the day of distress*, suitable unto which the Psalmist speaks in *Psalm* 32.7. *Thou art my hiding-place, thou shalt*

ſhalt preſerve me from trouble, thou ſhalt compaſs me about with Songs of Deliverance: Soul, art thou preſerved? it is Chriſt hath been thy hiding place. There were ſome in the days of *David*'s Calamity ſcoffed at him, and bid him *flee as a Bird unto his Mountain*; but ſee what he ſaith, *Pſal.* 11.1. *In the Lord I put my truſt, how ſay ye to my Soul, Flee as a Bird to your Mountain?* It was a Pſalm penn'd in the time when he fled from *Saul* (as I conceive) and it is as if he ſhould ſay, It is true, I have recourſe ſometimes unto this and that Mountain, and I do go up and down from place to place to be hid from the hand of *Saul*, but I go as God leads me, as Chriſt goes before me; and where-ever I am, and which way ſo ever I look, it is the Lord is my Refuge, from him I expect my ſecurity. You read, *Ezek.* 1.26. of *a Throne, and upon the Throne there was one like unto a man*; that Man was the Man Chriſt Jeſus; the Throne upon which he ſat, is the Throne of his Providential Kingdom, where he ſits and governs all things in the World, and where he ſits to order all the matters in the following part of this Prophecy. Now ſee what he doth upon this Throne of his; *And the Lord ſaid unto him*, (that is, the Man cloathed with Linen, that had the Writers Inkhorn by his ſide) *Go through the midſt of Jeruſalem, and ſet a mark upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh, and that cry for all the Abomina-*

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tions that be done in the midst thereof; and to the others he said, Go ye after him through the City, and smite, let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly, old and young, both maids and little children, and women, but come not near any upon whom is the mark, &c. I gather hence that it is Christ hath the marking men for destruction or preservation: he upon the Throne of his Providential Kingdom, governs and orders for preserving or destroying in a day of slaughter; therefore if thou art kept, know who hath been thy Keeper. This was typified in the Case of *Aaron*, in that sore Plague, *Numb.* 16.46, &c. *And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a Censer, and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on Incense, and go quickly unto the Congregation, and make an attonement for them, for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun: and Aaron took as Moses commanded him, and ran into the midst of the Congregation, & behold the plague was begun among the People; and he put on Incense and made an atonement, and stood between the dead and the living, and the Plague was stayed.* *Aaron* he was the High Priest, and in that Office a great Type of Christ, and in this action a great Type of Christ also; it is he, by his intercession and mediation, steps in between the Living and the Dead; if thou art not fallen among them that fall, it is because this *Aaron* hath stept in to thy help, because he hath rescued

ed thee, and been a Preſervation unto thee. The 68th Pſalm is a Pſalm applicable to *Chriſt*, witneſs that paſſage in the 18th verſe, *Thou haſt aſcended up on high, thou haſt led captivity captive, and received Gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious alſo, that the Lord God might dwell among them*; This, you know, is ſpoken of and applied unto Chriſt by the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, Chap. 4. mark now what follows in this 68th Pſalm, verſ. 26. *He that is our God is the God of Salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death*: This is alſo ſpoken of *Chriſt*, unto him belong the iſſues from death; ſo that if thou art ſpared, and ſaved in a day of ſlaughter, it is from the Lord, thou muſt ſay thou haſt had this iſſue from death. That which I drive at, is this, (that you may not loſe my deſign) Have you not cauſe, great cauſe, to ſee that the Branch of the Lord by your eſcape be rendered ſo much the more excellent and comely to you, ſince what eſcape you have, is through him? if you are preſerved, it is by Chriſt, unto whom you are beholding for your preſervation.

3. Further, The eſcaping of ſlaughter ſhould render the Lord beautiful and glorious to you, ſeeing it is from him that thou haſt not onely thy Eſcaping, but the Good of thy Eſcape; not onely the Thing it ſelf, but the Mercy with it; by him it is bleſſed unto you, if it be bleſſed. Some there are (and O unhappy they!) unto whom

whom every thing is accurſed, *Pſal.*69.22. *Let their Table become a ſnare before them, and that which ſhould have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.* Every enjoyment is a ſnare unto ſome; *The curſe of the Lord is in the Houſe of the Wicked*, Prov.3.33. Some men, though they have houſes to hide their heads in, and it may be many things in them that look like *mercies*, they are yet *curſes* to them; poſſibly their houſes are full of the things of this World, Waters of a full Cup may be rung out unto them, their Eyes may ſtand out with fatneſs, and they may have more then Heart can wiſh; they may have Basket and Store, and yet be curſed both in the Basket and in the Store: it may be their Houſes are full of Children, and the Subſtance they leave is left unto their Babes, as is the Pſalmiſts expreſſion; but they are curſed alſo in the fruit of their Womb: it may be Health and Life are within their Walls, not one ſick, not one dead, all preſerved, and well; but yet it is not well, for this their preſervation is not bleſſed. Let me tell you, that read theſe lines, As God ſmites ſome in anger, in anger alſo ſometimes he forbears to ſmite; therefore in *Iſa.*1.5. *Why ſhould you be ſmitten any more?* It was a word of great diſpleaſure: The eſcaping of *ſome* may be curſed unto them; but if thy eſcape be bleſſed unto thee, and thou haſt it, and the mercy with it, thou art beholding

holding unto Christ for both: Some are preserved in love; sweet is that expression, and happy they that can say so, *Isa.*38.17. *Behold for peace I had great bitterness, but thou hast in love to my Soul delivered it from the pit of corruption*; He was not onely *delivered from the pit of corruption*, but *delivered in love unto his Soul*, in a way of mercy and special kindness: happy they that can say, Thou hast given me this escape in love to my Soul! But how comes a Soul to have such a Deliverance, and to have it in love too? from that general word, *Gen.*22.18. there is the fountain-head from whence our mercies flow, *In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*; in *Abraham*'s Seed (meaning Christ) all the Blessings come, that come upon the World: Whatever comes to thee or me, if it come as a Blessing, it is through the Seed of *Abraham*, and upon that score we are to place it. Now if thou do'st escape, and this Escape be sanctified unto thee, and all this be but Fruit growing upon this Branch of the Lord, should not thy Escape render the Lord Jesus the more amiable to thy Soul?

4. Thou hast not onely the mercy of thy Escape, from Christ, but skill to walk under it becomingly; *Vain man would be wise, though he is born as the wild Asses Colt*, untoward, untractable, good for nothing, unruly and perverse, and if there be any thing of Wisdom given him, it is

from this fountain, 1 *Cor.*1.30. it is Christ that is *made of God unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*; it is *in him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, and from him communicated and given down unto poor Creatures; as *Paul*, Phil.4.12,13. saith, *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need; I can do all things through Christ that strengthneth me:* that is, I can do all wisely, I can use and manage every Providence rightly: and how canst thou do this; *Paul? Through Christ that strengthens me.* So to use Afflictions and Distresses, Miseries and Mercies becomingly, thy strength is in Christ, and from him it must be communicated unto thee; and therefore the sence of this should much endear Christ unto thy Soul, that not only the Mercy of an Escape is from him, but also Wisdom to use, and rightly to manage it. To which adde,

5. That by Jesus Christ, this Branch of the Lord, we have not onely an Escape in time of common Calamity, but greater and better things, which by our Escape we may be led unto the consideration and meditation of: Certain it is, that through this Branch of the Lord, we have salvations of more kinds then one: in that 68th *Psalm*, vers.20. where it is said, *He that*

that is our God is the God of Salvation; *Junius* renders it thus, *He is a God powerful to all kindes of Salvation*; or as the *Hebrew* is, *He is the God of Salvations*, in the plural number: So is it with Souls that have really Grace and Mercy from Christ, they have Salvations of divers sorts: they have Salvation from Sin, from that power and dominion that sin is wont to have in the Soul, they are wonderfully by Christ delivered from that bondage; and Christ had therefore his Name *Jesus*, *Mat.* 1. 21. *Because he shall save his People from their sins*: Though the *Canaanites* may dwell in the Land, they shall become tributary, they shall not sit at the Stern turning the Soul which way they please. Christ brings Salvation from Hell, he hath the Key of *David*, that shuts and no man openeth, and opens and no man shuts; he delivereth from wrath to come, 1 *Thes.* 1. 10. Salvation from sin, and the most dismal issues and consequences thereof, and from a temporal deliverance, the Soul hath occasion to consider and think of these Salvations. *Psal.* 103. I suppose might be penn'd upon the occasion of some temporal deliverance, for this reason, because the Psalmist saith in the fourth verse, The Lord *did heal his diseases, and redeemed his life from destruction*; what doth this make the Psalmist think of? in vers. 3. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases*; it made him think of

pardoning Grace, and greater Mercy, that he was made partaker of through the Lords bounty and goodneſs. *Hezekiah* from his temporal deliverance, was raiſed to think of ſome higher pieces of kindneſs, *Iſa.*38.17. *Thou haſt in love to my Soul, delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind my back.* Now if from this Branch of the Lord you have this fruit, not onely of an Eſcape from temporal evil, but freedom alſo from greater; and the eſcape from temporal ones, help to raiſe up the Soul to conſider its intereſt in higher things; then your Eſcape it ſelf ſhould render Chriſt more dear and precious to you then he hath been in times paſt. This therefore may ſerve for the ground of the point, why the Soul ſhould from its Eſcape have higher Thoughts of Chriſt.

I come now to the ſecond thing propounded for proſecution of this Doctrine: When may a poor heart have ſome cauſe to conclude its Eſcape hath this effect attending it, That it is accompanied with more precious thoughts of this Branch of the Lord?

I anſwer to it in five things:

1. If in thy Eſcape thou findeſt thy heart more crucified unto the World, that it is gotten out of thy heart beyond what it was, it is to be hoped the Branch of the Lord grows in thy heart, and flouriſheth more then it did. Methinks

thinks it is with the heart of a poor Creature, with reſpect to Chriſt and the World, as it is between the Sea and Land; the Sea ſometimes breaks out, and overflows much of the Earth; you can very hardly recover any Land out of the Sea, and be able to fence it out, or if you do, it is at every turn ready to break in again, and ſwallow up all that hath been recovered out of it: this World breaks in like a Sea, and ſwallows up the hearts of many poor Creatures, it drinks up their Souls, *Eccleſ.* 3. 11. *Alſo he hath ſet the World in their Hearts*; the World is ſo rooted in them that it over-runs them: Some are called in Scripture *the men of this World*, Pſal. 17. 14. *From men of this World, which have their portion in this life*; and they are called the Men of this World, becauſe there is nothing elſe they love and delight in: How hard a thing is it for Chriſt to get ground upon the Heart, ſo as to fence out this World; witneſs that caſe, *Luk.* 18. when one comes unto Chriſt, and ſaith, *Good Maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit eternal Life?* he bid him at laſt, ver. 22. *Go ſell all thou haſt, and diſtribute unto the Poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in Heaven, and come and follow me: and when he heard this, he was very ſorrowful, for he was very rich.* Some of whom it is hoped ſometimes are recovered out of the World, and the World in ſome good meaſure fenced out of their hearts, that one would think

there were no great danger of its returning; yet it again breaks in like a torrent, and carries them away, so that all their Profession comes to nothing: This World is a Sea that drowns thousands, thousands of Professors are by it born down headlong, yet some through the power of Christ over-come the World, 1 *John* 5.4. *Who ever is born of God, overcometh the world; and this is the victory we have over the World, even our Faith.* Then the World is said to be overcome, when it is fallen in a mans esteem and love; when a Soul is convinced what Idolatry it is, for this World to rule in the heart; for Covetousness is Idolatry; when the Soul comes to see that all below is empty, perishing, and vain, and that that fades in the very using, then it is overcome in some good measure. Now Soul, if thou canst say that thy Escape in the day in which God frowned upon the World, hath made thee see all to be vanity and vexation of Spirit, and that thy heart is an entertainment for something more noble, it is to be hoped that Christ hath gained upon thee. *Psal.* 45.10, 11. *Hearken, O Daughter, and consider, and encline thine ear, forget also thine own Kindred and thy Fathers House, so shall the King greatly desire thy Beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* You must not worship the World: then you worship it, when it hath that place in the Heart that Christ should only possess;

sess; but if the love of this World be rooted out, it is to be hoped that the love unto Christ hath expelled it, and the sight of Christ more excellent, hath made thee trample upon these terrene objects. It was *Moses* his ardent love unto Christ, that made him *esteem the reproaches of Christ, greater riches then the treasures of Egypt*, Heb. 11.26. It was his value for Christ, made him under-value these things. I desire I might reach every of your Consciences that read these lines, if God will own me so far, I would urge it upon you; We are yet escaped through infinite mercy, hath your escaping had this effect, to raise up in you higher thoughts of Christ than formerly? Can you witness it by this evidence? You are possibly, some of you, those that have had much to do in the World, and concernments of it; if you have not been entangled by it, and found that it hath been very apt to get upon your hearts, I must say, Either you know not your hearts, or you have sped much better then most in your capacity: But can you say, It is now turn'd out of doors? that the leasure-time you have had, hath helped you to look above this Earth, to view things of a more excellent nature; and Christs glory hath so ravished your Souls, that you can say that there is nothing that your *souls* love above or equal with him? Put it to your Consciences, I charge it upon you as your duty from the Lord. And,

2. If you can ſay, Sin is out of your Heart more then it was, it is to be hoped Chriſt is there; if that be down, Chriſt is ſet up, for theſe ſtand in oppoſition to each other; it muſt be the fall of the one, that muſt raiſe the other: the Diſpenſations of God are directed unto the deſtruction of Sin in the hearts of his People; if he correct, it is a Rod to whip out the Folly bound up in their Hearts: and he hath ſaid that the fruit of ſuch Providences ſhould be the taking away of ſin, *Iſa.27.9. By this ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his Sin:* If he ſhew kindneſs, it is to deſtroy ſin, to purge that out of the Heart, *Ezek.36.25,26. Then will I ſprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean; from all your filthineſs and from all your Idols will I cleanſe you, a new Heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and take away the ſtony heart and give you a heart of fleſh.* It relates unto them that ſhould eſcape publick Calamities, which ſhould be attended with the purging away of Sin; and if you can ſay that ſin is fallen in your love, it is to be hoped Chriſt is raiſed. It is between Sin and Chriſt as it was between the Houſe of *David* and *Saul*, 2 Sam.3.1. *There was long war between the Houſe of Saul and the Houſe of David, but David waxed ſtronger and ſtronger, and the Houſe of Saul weaker and weaker*; as the Houſe of *Saul* weakened, ſo the Houſe of *David*

vid ſtrengthened; as Sin weakens in the Soul, Chriſt getteth ground: I may ſay of the luſts that are in the Soul, as God ſometimes ſaid concerning *Amalek*, 1 Sam. 15. 3. *Go and ſmite Amalek, and utterly deſtroy all that they have, and ſpare them not, but ſlay both Man and Woman, Infant and Suckling, Camel and Aſs:* the Luſts in the heart are deſtined unto utter deſtruction, God would have them killed, and not one ſpared, not an *Agag* left alive. I would put the queſtion unto you, the Lord help you to put it home to your Souls; You that are eſcaped, is all ſlain in your Souls, that is wont to ſtand up againſt Chriſt? is there not an *Agag* ſpared? I wiſh (if you ſay that Sin is killed) the Lord may not ſay unto you, as *Samuel* ſaid to *Saul*, verſ. 14. *What then means the bleating of the Sheep, and the lowing of the Oxen in mine ears?* What means that pride, paſſion, earthly-mindedneſs, in the heart of the People of God? if Sin be not brought down, Chriſt is not exalted; if Sin be where it was, Chriſt is where he was; the Branch of the Lord is not made beautiful and glorious, though his kindneſs ſhould have had that effect upon you.

3. If you can ſay that are eſcaped, That the Saints are become more precious unto you, it is to be hoped that Chriſt is become ſo alſo: Many Souls have had very precious thoughts of Saints, great eſteem of them, much love for them,

them; *Psal.*16.1. *My goodness extends not to thee, but unto the Saints, and to the Excellent, in whom is all my delight.* Now love to Saints increaseth according as your love to Christ encreaseth: thou canst not love a Saint, until thou hast first loved Christ; *Col.* 1.4. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of your love that ye have to all Saints*; love to Saints followed faith in Christ. I remember a good Soul, that hath been lately telling me, that this was his constant experience, According as my Soul grows in love to Christ, so it grows in love to Saints: Even as when the Springs grow higher, you may conclude a *fulness of water* in the place from whence they are fed; so if the Saints are more precious then they were wont to be, he that is the Fountain of all grace, it is to be presumed, hath let in more of himself into thy Soul. Many of you that read these things possibly have been wont to be the Companions of them that fear the Lord, and have met and conversed with them, but how have they been in your hearts? have they been dear, have they lodged in your Bosom? it may be some will complain, Our Souls have not been so knit unto them as they should have been; but can you say, That fault is somewhat amended since the Lord hath shown you kindness, and not onely mark'd you for, but blest you with preserving-mercy?

4. Thou mayst hope thy Soul is growing in its

its love unto Christ, if thou canst say, since thy Escape thy Soul hungers more after Communion with him then it was wont to do. The natural issue of Love is to desire Enjoyment; and according as thy desires of enjoyment of communion with Christ are, so is thy love unto Christ, of this thou mayst be confident: Many Souls that go up and down from one Duty to another, have not their hearts inflamed with holy desires to meet with Christ in ways of Duty; and therefore it is said of some, *Their Oblations were vain*, that is, because not directed unto their proper ends: The Lord (*Isa.*64.5.) hath promised that he would *meet with them that rejoyce and work Righteousness, that remember Him in their ways:* They that would see the Lord, meet with him, and hold fellowship with him, they shall be delighted in his Approaches unto them. How is thy heart? if the Branch of the Lord be more glorious unto thee, thou wilt more desire and breathe after communion with God: Says the Spouse, *I sought him whom my Soul loveth.* I hope I write to some that know what communion with Christ means, it is that that all understand not; it is a Riddle to many, I fear to some professing Ones: If thou art taught of God, and Christ hath to do with thy spirit, and thou art really a gainer by thy escape, thou dost encrease in longings after communion with Christ.

5. Hereby

5. Hereby it will appear that the Branch of the Lord is become beautiful and glorious unto thee who art escaped in this day of Distress, if there be a great care upon thy heart to be found living up unto every Duty which Christ requires and calls for at the hands of them that are escaped: every Mercy is a Call to Duty, & lays an obligation upon the heart to some Duties or other; so this eminent Mercy of Preservation in the midst of slaughtering-Providences, hath a loud Call from Christ, to live in an hearty respect unto some especial Duties that are enjoyned thee; which are such as these:

1. It is the requirement of Christ, That after thou art escaped a Calamity, thou consider seriously, and seriously lay unto heart, and mourn for whatever provocation might cause him to shake the Rod over thee; this is certain, that the time of our escape, as well as our distress, should make us seriously to consider, and having considered, to mourn over whatever abominations may have occasioned the Lord to come forth at such a rate; Scripture hath more then a little to say for this, *Ezek.* 36. 31. *Then shall you remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your Iniquities, and for your abominations.* The time intended here, is the time when they should escape Calamities

lamities that were upon that People, and God should have wrought graciously for them, *Then shall you remember your Own evil ways*, not others onely, though you may remember others also; you may warrantably look abroad, consider the National sins and evils, but be sure thou forget not thy own; and having remembred, to loath thy self for them, to be offended with thy self, that thou shouldst have any hand in the procuring of any Judgement from the Lord. There is a great mistake very common, whether in Practice or Judgement, I will not stand to determine; we are not careful to mourn over our miscarriages, but when the Rod is on our Backs; like Children, while the Rod is on their Backs they will cry and mourn, but when the Father is pacified, then forget wherefore he was contending. The time of your escape is to be a time for enquiry into your ways, and mourning over them: look a text or two, one you have *Ezek. 6.9. And they that Escape of you shall remember me among the Nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes which go a whoring after their Idols, and they shall loath themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations:* observe what Fruit it is the Lord expects from them that are escaped; they shall remember me, and remember themselves too,

their

their ways and doings, and *then shall loath themselves*: to which adde, *Ezek.*7.16. *Escape* they shall, but being escaped there is a Duty lies upon them, *They should be upon the Mountains as the Doves of the Valleys, every one mourning for his iniquity.* The Babylonish Captives after they escaped out of Captivity, & out-lived the distress that had buried many, you find that at that time there was found a spirit of mourning upon them; *Ezra* 9.3. is an evident testimony of it, *And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and pluckt off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonied:* thus did *Ezra*, and thus should every one that escapeth the Day of Gods Controversie. Now what is the frame of your hearts? truly all our hearing and knowing of what frame we should be in, will stand for little, unless you compare your Spirits and the Word together, and see whether it be with you accordingly: This you may be confident of, we have all had a hand in the provocation of this day, and if so, we should have also an eye to look into our hearts, and mourn over our evil ways, which must be done if we would have a proof unto our selves, that this Branch of the Lord is become glorious to us after our escape.

2. The Lord expects of them that escape, That they should perform their Vows, make good the Covenant and Promises which they made

made in the day when they were in trouble and fear; it is very common with men in a day when distress is threatned, to make large Promises, and when the distress is over, to be as backward in performing, as before they were forward in promising: this was the case of that people, *Jer.2.20. For of old time I have broken thy Yoke, and burst thy Bonds, and thou saidest I will not transgress; when upon every high Hill, and under every green Tree, thou wanderest, playing the Harlot:* the meaning is, when distress was upon them they cried, if God would but take off that distress, and remove the stroke, they would be a people not transgressing, a holy people; but how did they keep the Promise? *whenas upon every high Hill, and under every green Tree thou wanderest, playing the Harlot;* falsified their word abominably; that is a great evil that the Lord cannot well pass by: that is a known Scripture, *Eccles.5.4,5. When thou vowest a Vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou hast vowed: better it is that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not pay:* in this kind delays are dangerous; *defer not to pay thy Vows, for he hath no pleasure in folly;* it is folly for a man to promise unto God what he means not to perform; *Better it is not to vow, then having vowed not to pay:* the Devil hath a double design upon creatures in days of distress, and our own hearts much

much deceive us in it: First, I am perſwaded the Devil puts poor Creatures many times upon a great forwardneſs to make Promiſes, and many times our hearts do exceedingly deceive us by feeding us with ſome ſecret hopes by our Promiſes to buy out an indulgence from the Lord, that we may eſcape the evil we fear: and the ſecond deſign of the Devil is, when he hath brought the Soul to bind it ſelf unto the Lord in abundance of bonds, then to cool the heart as faſt as he can, and make it forget its engagements, and ſo wraps the Soul in abundance of guilt. I have found that there is no guilt defiles the Soul at a greater rate then the breach of Covenant; for God will not endure to be mocked, and have the Promiſes made unto him falſified; God will put your Bonds in ſuit againſt you, and require of you what you have been free to engage for: *Deut.*23.21. *When thou ſhalt vow a Vow unto the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt not ſlack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will ſurely require it of thee*; and it would be ſin in thee, it would be ſin not to live up unto Engagements. Examine your hearts what Engagements have you paſſed in the days of your diſtreſs? it may be Viſitations were near you, you were in eminent hazard, and your hearts troubled for fear; did you not ſay, Lord, If thou wilt keep me this day, if I may but out-live this diſtreſs, never will I be ſo vain, ſo earthly,

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so carnal, so slight in the Work of God as *I* have been? Have you not past some such or the like promise to the great God? Now Jesus Christ he is privy unto all that you have said and done, though it were in secret, he hath taken an account of all that you have engaged to be and do; how do you perform? you cannot comfortably conclude that Christ hath gotten ground in your hearts, unless you have paid your Vows to the Lord. The Servants of God have been conscientious in the Case; *Psal.66.* 13. *I will go into thy House with burnt-offerings, I will pay thee my Vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble: David* had his troubles as well as other of his Neighbours, and in his troubles he did sometimes make Promises unto God; herein he was honest and faithful, did conscientiously regard the performing the Promises he had past: and thus to do, will be a proof of your love to, and esteem of this Branch of the Lord, as more excellent to you, then he was wont to be. Saith *David*, Psal. 116. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice, and my supplications*; that is, I will love him better then ever I did; if he had but a little, he shall now have more; and what proof doth he give of it? vers. 14. *I will pay my Vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his People:* here was a proof it. The Lord help us that have the Vows of God upon us, to evi-

dence that Christ is become glorious unto us, by performing our Covenant: God is known to be a Covenant-keeping-God, and his People should be like their heavenly Father. But again,

3. A third thing required from them that escape a day of Calamity, is this, That Christ be owned in the Escape, that he have the glory of it; put it not upon your natural Fortitude and Courage, your natural hardiness and boldness, as some vaunting spirits are apt to do, and to conclude thence was their preservation: *God* doth not fear to strike the most fearless, and sometimes the most fearless are in the greatest danger: Put not thy escape upon the score of thy own Wisdom, that thou hast acted thus and thus prudently for thy preservation; if the Lord would, he could easily have out-witted thee; and if he had not been with thee in the acting, the best of thy Wisdom would not have been useful; take heed of boasting in Means, if Means have been successful, look up to that God that hath been pleased to bless them unto that end, *Psal.* 116.8. *David* puts the matter upon its proper Basis, *Thou hast delivered my Soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling:* Gracious hearts desire to cry as *Moses* and the Children of *Israel* did, when they saw *Pharoah* and his Host sunk as Lead in the Sea, and themselves preserved, to their great amaze-

amazement, *Exod.* 15. 2. *The Lord is my Strength, and my Song, and He is become my Salvation; He is my God, and I will prepare him a Habitation, my Fathers God, and I will exalt him According to this time it shall be said* (said *Balaam* in his Prophecy) *What hath the Lord wrought?* This must you and I say, *What hath the Lord wrought?* The truth is, Christ suffers much in the World, and suffers much from his own People, they rob him of his glory, we are apt to give that honour that is due to him, unto some one else; but it should be our care to be found in the frame with them, *Jer.* 50. 28. *The voice of them that flee and escape out of Babylon, to declare in Sion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the vengeance of his temple:* it is the work of escaping Ones to praise the Lord, and declare his works: Would you all have some token for good, that the interest of Christ is promoted in you? see whether it be your care to give Christ the glory of this Salvation, of which you have been partakers.

4. This is the requirement of Christ from them that are escaped, That the sence of this Mercy should long rest upon our Spirits: our goodness in every respect is apt to be like the morning-cloud, and the early dew, that soon passeth away; and in this respect more then in many other things; the sence of our

deliverance is very apt to wear off the Soul; but it is a frame that Christ much mislikes, where he findes it; an instance or two may serve to convince us of it, *Psal.*78.10,11. *They kept not the Covenant of God*; possibly by this may be intended the Covenants they made with God in distress, they did not keep them; why not? it was because *they forgot his Works, and Wonders that he had shewed them*; and one sin draws many more after it oft times; they forgot the Works of God, and so their Covenant with God, both are taken ill, and the latter as ill as any; that God should shew abundance of kindness to a People, whilst they slight, and dis-esteem, and let the sence of that kindness slip out of their minds; and therefore he complains of the same thing, *Psal.*106.13. *They soon forgat his Works, they waited not for his Counsel:* They were the delivering-Works of God, and all the wonders he had shewed them, they soon forgot, the sence thereof was crept out of their hearts in a little time. All of us alive may say we have seen much of the goodness of God to us, but if we should be of the number of them that soon forget his goodness, we do very evilly requite the Lord.

5. This is the requirement of Christ from them that are escaped in the day of Calami-

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ty, That we ſhould be dedicated, conſecrated and given up to his Uſe and Service in our whole Courſe: This is the obligation that Chriſt hath laid on our Souls, by carrying us through the diſtreſſes of this day, *That the reſt of the time we ſpend in the fleſh, ſhould not be ſpent according to the will of the fleſh, but according to the will of God, that the reſt of the time of our ſojourning here, might be ſpent in fear.* It is a kind of a new life that every one of us have received, and this new Life ſhould have Newneſs of Life going along with it: ſaith the Apoſtle, *I beſeech you by the mercies of God, that you give up your ſelves, Body and Soul, as a Sacrifice to God, which is but your reaſonable ſervice*; and ſuch a mercy as this doth call for it, that your Souls ſhould be for God, and your Bodies for God; the Body hath received a great deal of mercy at this time, that is preſerved and kept, the Clay-Cottage kept from tumbling to duſt and aſhes; now all the members of the Body, as well as the powers of the Soul, ought to be for the Lord: this the Lord expects, and it is but your *reaſonable ſervice*, which in common Juſtice ſhould be given unto Chriſt: *Pſal.* 116.8,9. *For thou haſt delivered my Soul from death, mine Eyes from tears, and my Feet from falling; I will walk before the Lord in the land of the Living*: that

is, I will walk as in his ſight and preſence, I will look to maintain a good frame of Life and Converſation in the reſt of the time I have to ſpend in the World: And thus may you teſtifie unto your ſelves and others, that Chriſt gains on you by your Eſcape this day, if you be found in the diſcharge of thoſe Duties which are expected from you. And thus I have diſpatched the Doctrinal part.

USE I.

If this be a proper effect of your Eſcaping in a day of ſlaughter, to have the Branch of the Lord become lovely; know this kindneſs hath been ſhewed us; therefore it concerns us narrowly to ſee how this effect is wrought out: Every Soul ſhould turn his Eyes inward, I would hope your Souls have been a little thus engaged; I have not long ſince, met with a People that would eagerly make it their buſineſs to compare themſelves and a Word together, and ſee where their guilt was, and get what light they could into their hearts: this be confident of, the God of Heaven is conſidering diligently, Jeſus Chriſt (this Branch of which we are ſpeaking) is obſerving what is the Fruit of every Mercy; as *Deut.*32.15. *But Jeſurun waxed fat and kicked; thou art grown thick,*

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thou art covered with fatneſs: then he forſook God which made him, and lightly eſteemed the Rock of his Salvation: when God had done much for him, he conſiders how he had carried it, but he found ſad effects of all, *Jeſurun waxed fat, and kicked:* I would the goodneſs of God to us ſhould have ſome more kindly reception, and entertainment. Now that which I ſhall do for the preſent, ſhall not be to clear it up to you that Chriſt hath gotten ground upon you, for as to that, I ſhall refer you to what is ſpoken already, but to lay ſome few things before you, that may convince you, if really you are ſhort and wanting in this bleſſed iſſue af your Eſcape.

If really this effect be not wrought upon your hearts, it will appear by theſe four or five things, and I beg you to conſider them ſeriouſly.

1. If in the day when the Rod of God hung more eminently over your heads, you were not conſidering and pondering what effect it ſhould work, and if the Spirit of God were not teaching and inſtructing your Souls, that it was to produce a greater eſteem of Chriſt in your hearts; then I fear it is not done, I fear Chriſt hath no more of you then he was wont to have: You know this, that God with his Correction, is wont to give Inſtruction; therefore ſaith the Pſalmiſt,

miſt (*Pſal.*94.12.) *Bleſſed is the man whom thou Chaſteneſt, and Teacheſt out of thy Law:* God is wont to tell the Soul, where it is wanting, what he calls for, and what he would have wrought in the heart: So *Job* 36 9,10. *Then he ſheweth them their Work, and their Tranſgreſſions, that they have exceeded, he openeth alſo their Ears unto Diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity:* He ſpeaks here about a Day of Affliction, and truly if the Lord hath not been teaching you, and ſhewing you that you were wanting in your eſteem of Chriſt, it is much to be queſtioned he is not become glorious. *David* (Pſal.119.67.) ſaid, *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy Word:* how came he to be brought in unto God, to walk with him, and keep his Word and his Way better then he was wont to do? God had been ſhewing him that he was out of the way, and where he ſhould be, and ſo brought him in again. Commune with your own hearts, my Friends, faithfully: have you ſat like Stocks and Stones, under the Viſitations of God, when his Rod was upon others, and threatned you? Had you any of the Viſits of God? Were your Souls exerciſing themſelves at a ſpiritual rate? Did God make any approaches unto you? Or did you live in that time without God? If you did, I fear you are without him ſtill. 2. If

2. If your souls have not been pressing after Christ, and longing for a better frame towards him, longing for an higher esteem of him; it is doubtful the esteem of him is not raised in your souls: such an esteem of Christ is not a frame that useth to steal upon the heart, it knows not how; It is for the most part the issue of much care and pains, and great diligence; and if thy soul hath been wanting herein, it is to be feared that the interest of Christ is not to any great degree promoted in thee: Some souls find sin very apt to creep in do they what they can, and that it is a work, a hard work to keep it down; nor is it less difficult to encrease in our esteem of Christ, *Phil.* 3. *Paul* would know more of Christ, and the power of his Resurrection, what course did he take in order to it? saith he, *I go forward*, and *I press on to the mark*, *for the price of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus*: He set himself unto the work with great diligence. How have you been exercising your selves? have you been crying unto the Lord in secret, wrestling and pleading with him that he would carry on the Love of his Son in you? What was it you asked of the Lord, was it meerly to be kept from the evil of the day? or that the work of Christ might be promoted in you by your escape? If your hearts have

have not been exercised this way, I fear the Branch of the Lord is not become glorious unto you, though you are escaped.

3. If in your Escape your great care is how to repair and piece up those outward dammages that you have sustained by this Visitation, the Interest of Christ I fear hath not much gained in you; possibly many of you may be sensible you have sustained outward dammages by this day, if your hearts are only contriving how you may make up those breaches made upon your outward concerns, you are not where you should be: I fear many this day will be like to the Seamen and Mariners, who after a storm, when a calm comes, they are busie in patching up their tackling, and repairing the dammages the Vessel hath sustained by the storm, but not so carefull to consider who hath preserved them in the storm, and brought them to a calm: but this is a bad frame; if thou beest gained upon by Christ, thou wilt say, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his kindness?* To which add,

4. If thy heart in this time of thy Escape be not affected wth that unkind usage which Christ meets with from many escaping-ones, I shall fear that thou thy self also dost not use him kindly, nor prize him much the more though thou hast an Escape from his good-

goodneſs ; doubtleſs Chriſt meets with much unkindneſs from ſome that have eſcaped. How many in an Atheiſtical ſpirit this day, live as if there were no after-ſtate, nor eternal judgment? as they, 1 *Cor.* 15. cry, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dye*; they have learned to know that Death hangs over their heads, therefore what will they do? why ſerve their luſts as much as they can, make uſe of their time, as they call it, though it be to abuſe time, and turn the grace of God into wantonneſs. Now when thou haſt heard things, how is it with thee? If Chriſt hath gotten ground within thee, theſe things will pierce thine heart. The evil of wicked men is a great grief unto the Saints; therefore it is ſaid, 2 *Pet.* 2. *Righteous Lot was vexed with the filthy converſation of the wicked*; his righteous ſoul was vexed in hearing and ſeeing the diſhonour that was done unto the Lord, it was a burthen to him. And ſo *David* ſaith, *Wo is me that I ſojourn in Meſech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar*; that is, among a people where God is diſhonoured. When thou lookeſt abroad in the World, and ſeeſt how little ſin is born down, and how little the Intereſt of Chriſt is advanced among any that are eſcaped; if thy Eſcape hath furthered Chriſt's Intereſt in thee, this will

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grieve thy heart; be careful and watchfull in the making a right use of this matter. But to come to a second Use.

USE II.

Should the escaping dreadful Calamity, work the heart to a prizing this Branch of the Lord; then if any of you have a witness coming in against you that it hath not had this effect, I must say, the Lord will say unto you as unto them, *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish and unwise?* I would a little set before you the evil of this, and the misery that may follow upon it.

1. There is much sin in it; your sin lyeth in this, that you have hitherto crossed the design of God by what means you can, the Designs of the Lord are very much for the advancement of Christ; God saith his Son shall be exalted and extolled, and made high, and he works to this end by all means; Word and Rod are both intended to this end; he giveth you the Word to make way for Christ into the heart; he comes with the Rod, and why with that? *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with*

with me: He knocks by the Word, and he knocks by the Rod, and it is all, that the Door may be opened for the exalting of Christ. If he do deliver and save you in times of trouble, it is that he may be exalted. Is he not made glorious? If not, you cross God's design, *Hos.* 11. 4. *I drew them with the cords of a man, with the bands of love*; and *I was as one that took off the yoke from their jaws, and layed meat before them:* All this was that they might exalt the Lord. Now if it have not this issue upon you, you are guilty of the great sin of thwarting Gods designs. Further, there is sin in this respect; you pretend that you are for the exaltation of Christ; this is that you pray for: how oft have you prayed, *Thy Kingdom come?* how oft have you begged that Christ might become amiable and lovely to you? and is not Christ yet made glorious, not yet exalted? If not, your sin is this, it is doubtful your Profession is much of it Hypocrisy, and your praying, mocking of God; sins enow; you need not be guilty of greater evils.

2. It will endanger the intailing of punishment upon you, if Christ be not become glorious to you. To speak of two or three things briefly: 1. It will be doubtful it will lay thee under the plague of an hard heart,

heart, which is the ſoreſt of all plagues: if the Lord's dealings do not ſoften thee, and promote Chriſt's Intereſt in thee, it is to be doubted it will ſet thee further from *Chriſt*, and will leave thee under very great rockineſs and ſtoneineſs of heart: Not onely *Pharoah's* heart was hardned, when the dealings of God in removing the Plague did not work kindly upon him; but *Iſrael* had their hearts hardned alſo, as you may ſee *Heb.* 3. 8, 9. *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the Wilderneſs, when your Fathers tempted me, proved me, and ſaw my works: forty years, &c.* This was the ſin of *Iſrael* of old; and poſſibly the like evil may befall thy ſoul. And 2dly, if thy Eſcape have not produced this effect to render Chriſt more glorious, poſſibly thou ſhalt not yet eſcape for all this; thou ſetteſt up thy *Eben-ezer*, and ſayeſt, *Hitherto the Lord hath preſerved*; but it is but *hitherto*; thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth, God can return this very Judgement, and cauſe it to cut off thee and many more: the face of things look ſomething ſad for the preſent, * God is coming back ſome degrees in his diſpleaſure, and whoſe turn among us it may be to fall, we know

**The Plague increaſing at this time.*

know not; it may be any of our conditions, if God find us under hardneſs of heart; do not ſay *the bitterneſs of death is paſt*: remember that when the *Caldeans* had beſieged *Jeruſalem*, and by the coming of *Pharoah's* Army the Siege was broken up, preſently the people were confident the *Caldeans* ſhould come no more: but ſee a little what God ſaith, and alſo what he doth, *Jer.* 37. 7,8,9. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the God of Iſrael, thus ſhall ye ſay unto the King of Judah that ſent you unto me, to enquire of me, Behold Pharoahs Army which is come forth to help you, ſhall return to Egypt into their own Land, and the Caldeans ſhall come again and fight againſt this City, and take it, and burn it with fire. Thus ſaith the Lord, Deceive not your ſelves, ſaying, The Caldeans ſhall ſurely depart from us; for they ſhall not depart.* And ſo it came to paſſe, for in the 39th of *Jeremy* firſt verſe, it is ſaid, that *Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon came, and all his Army againſt Jeruſalem, and beſieged it*; and in the next verſe it is ſaid, *the City was broken up.* Theſe poor people were confident, becauſe the *Caldeans* were withdrawn and the Siege raiſed, they ſhould be in danger no more. It may be we ſay, the ſtorm is over, the Bill is much decreaſed: but alas it may increaſe again, and be yet more ſore than it hath been

been. Thus, I say, if Christ be not advanced in thee, possibly thou mayest not yet escape this Judgment. Or, 3dly, if not by this Judgment, God can meet with thee by others; he hath reserves of Judgments of divers kinds, and can easily and quickly meet with them that are not in the frames they should be; as God saith of *Moab*, *Isa.* 15. 8. *For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beer-Elim. For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring more upon Dimon, lyons upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the Land.* God had been dealing with the Moabites in some way of Judgement, and there was some of them remaining, but though they had been emptyed from vessel to vessel, their scent still remained, and now God saith he will come forth with another stroke. God hath every thing at his command, and he can commission another Dispensation; but let me tell you, it is sad if after thus long being under the hand of God, Christ be not advanced more in your hearts. And this leads me to the third Use of the Point.

USE

USE III.

If it be a bleſſed effect of Slaughtering-Judgements upon them that have eſcaped, to have Chriſt become more glorious; what ſhall we think of thoſe, who though they out-live a day of ſad Calamity, yet Chriſt is become more contemptible in their eyes? who inſtead of being brought near unto *Chriſt*, are at a greater diſtance from *Chriſt*: It is verily a ſad conſideration, that ſuch ſhould be the concluſion of ſuch a Providence upon the hearts and ſpirits of any; but yet I fear thus it is with more then a few. *Paul* (2Tim.3.13.) tells us, that *evil men and Seducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe*: It is the doom that paſſeth oft times upon evil men, that let the dealings of God with them be what they will, they are the worſe under them; wanting the help of the Spirit of *Grace* to manage and improve them for good, they grow into a worſe and more evil frame by them. All the goodneſs, the gracious dealings of God, they are peculiarly directed to win upon the heart, to bring Chriſt and Souls nearer together; this is hinted in *Rom.*2.4. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance, and long-ſuffering; not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repen-*

tance: We are to interpret the end of Gods kindneſs to be for the bringing the heart to bow, and ſtoop, and fall at the Foot of Jeſus Chriſt; in caſe it have not this iſſue, what iſſue elſe it produces will certainly be very ſad, namely the ſetting Souls at a greater diſtance from Chriſt, and plunging them into a condition worſe then they were in before; and ſo it is added, verſ. 5. *Thou treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath:* thou by this means raiſeſt up greater diſpleaſure between him and thy Soul. If you ſay Are there any that really have lower thoughts of Chriſt after they have eſcaped a day of Diſtreſs, then before? I anſwer, it is to be feared too many; and where you find one or more of theſe marks I ſhall lay down, you may conclude that ſuch perſons, though Chriſt hath dealt very tenderly with them, and not ſwept them away in a day of deſtruction, as he might have done, yet Chriſt is become more contemptible in their accounts then he was before.

1. Where you find a ſpirit more ſenceleſs and ſtupid, more ſottiſh and ſecure then before; ſuch a one is really ſet at a greater diſtance from Chriſt then before. Some there are, it is much to be feared, that having ſurvived this day of diſtreſs, begin now to look upon themſelves as out of reach, as if

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no future danger could possibly attend them, growing hard hearted, and exceeding secure after those dealings of the Lord under which they have fallen; such Souls and Christ are farther apart then they were wont to be: *Isa.57.15.* the Spirit of God tells you, *Christ* dwells in the *humble heart*, and with *a broken Spirit*: Now according as you find a heart melted, and broken, and laid low, put into a tender frame; so far Christ makes his approaches towards the Soul, and comes to be esteemed by it; but according as you find the spirits of men grow into a hardness, insensibility, and security, by so much you may conclude Christ is set at a distance from, and dis-esteemed by such Souls: and O that there were not many sensible proofs of a very insensible Spirit in many poor Creatures, who yet are allowed a being upon the Earth. If that be allowed to be a sign of security which Christ himself tells us was a sign of it, *Mat.24.38. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and knew not till the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be:* observe it, *Noah* was in his days a Preacher of Righteousness, he warned the People of Judgement to come; the People were ex-

ceeding ſtupid, not in the leaſt prevailed upon; and what was a proof of it? *They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage*, then at a more then ordinary rate; therefore it was an argument, what ever was ſaid unto them, or whatever God intended, they were not much awakened: If that were a ſign of ſtupidity then, ſo it is now ſurely, and gives a great deal of reaſon to conclude that Chriſt hath not gotten, but rather loſt upon many of the hearts of thoſe that have eſcaped.

2. Where perſons are more deſperately and eagerly ſet upon their luſts, there you may conclude Chriſt is become more contemptible then he was. There is ſuch a direct contrariety between ſin and Chriſt, that by how much the more a man grows in love with ſin, by ſo much the more he muſt grow out of love with Chriſt: *Rom.* 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can be:* Now by how much the more men grow more carnal, by ſo much their enmity againſt Chriſt is increaſed and improved. Sinne doth not onely harden mens hearts, but it alſo blinds and ſhuts mens eyes; and by how much the more a man plungeth himſelf in ſin and gives up himſelf to the ſervice of it, by ſo much you may conclude his mind is blinded,

ded, and his eyes ſhut from ſeeing that glory and beauty that is eminently found in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: The more a man ſets himſelf in the way of ſin, the more he is under the power of Satan; and where Satan rules as a Prince, what doth he? 2 *Cor.*4.4. the Apoſtle ſaith, *The God of this World* he *blinds the minds of men.* And from this you may gather, if you can obſerve that men that are preſerved this day, their hearts are not in the leaſt taken out of thoſe ways of ſin in which they did walk, but are rather ſet with greater eagerneſs to fulfil the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind; you may, without breach of Charity, conclude thoſe perſons are more blinded, and leſs able to ſee any beauty and excellency in this Branch of the Lord then before. Onely we will hope, if this ſpirit be found upon any, that it is but, as the Apoſtle ſaith ſometimes concerning the Jews, *Rom.*11.7. *What then? Iſrael hath not obtained that which he ſeeketh for; but the Election hath obtained it, and the reſt were blinded*; We will hope that if there be any that are the more hardened and blinded by this gracious Diſpenſation of Preſervation, it is not the Elect that are blinded, but thoſe that are given up, which the Lord intends not to look after in any gracious way: We will hope for any that have any intereſt in

the Lord Jesus, that he hath not, nor will leave them to such a spirit.

3. If you find any more at enmity with the People of Christ, then before, you may conclude Christ is more contemptible in their eyes then he was before: Mind not what men talk; do not heed mens grasping after the name of Christians, and talking of Christ as a Saviour; but know that men may speak of Christ, as the whole Nation doth, and other Nations do, and yet have no more real love to him, then those that never heard of Christ: It is a very notable Scripture, *Jer.* 12.2. *Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.* It may be well with a People, they may be in an outward prosperous condition, they may be flourishing, and speak much of Christ, and boast of him; and yet Christ may not have one inch of their Hearts. But you shall judge whether really men be for Christ or no, by their dealings with his People: if you find their enmity against the Saints grow, let their boast be as it will, instead of discovering glory in *Christ*, they are become more at enmity with *Christ* then they were. Let me allude, at least, to that word, 1 *John* 5.1. *Every one that loves him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him:*

him: It is ſpoken concerning the Father and Chriſt; men will ſay they love God, why ſays *John*, You cannot, unleſs you love Chriſt; *for he that loveth him that begetteth, loveth him alſo that is begotten:* So ſay I of Saints; Do you love Chriſt? if ſo, you love them that are begotten of him. To which I might adde a fourth, and that is this:

4. Doubtleſs there is cauſe, at leaſt, to fear that the Branch of the Lord is not become glorious to thoſe eſcaping ones who have endeavoured to hinder the efficacy and force of this diſpenſation, upon the hearts of poor Creatures: I will tell who I think are ſome way culpable herein; they that have covered the dealings of Chriſt; if there be, as is ſhrewdly ſuſpected, any that have hid this preſent Work of God upon us, and not let us know it in its full extent & latitude †; it will certainly lie upon their ſcore that have ſtood in the way of Chriſts Work, and hindered that efficacy it might have had upon the hearts of poor Creatures. But to all or any of thoſe that are rather at a greater diſtance from Chriſt, than brought nearer to Chriſt, I ſhall onely ſay in brief, that it is worth the minding. God conſiders what influence and

† *It was feared ſome* 1000's *were kept out of the weekly Bills*

effect his dealings have upon the hearts of men; when a Judgement is on their Backs, the Lord conſiders whether it work any good effect upon them, or no; as in 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. it is ſaid of *Ahaz*, That *in the time of his diſtreſs, he did treſpaſs againſt the Lord yet more; this is that King Ahaz:* God notes eſpecially that under his hand a perſon became worſe and worſe; and there is ſuch a mark put upon him, as is ſcarce put upon any in Scripture, *This is that King Ahaz*, that *Ahaz* that became worſe in a day of diſtreſs. God alſo ſtrictly obſerves how his kindneſs works, in that fore-cited place, *Rom.* 2. 4. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering; not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Obſerve the long-ſuffering of God, and his forbearance, that is, in not cutting down his poor creatures when he hath them at ſome kinde of advantage, as in a day of common Calamity; if God ſpares them then, he manifeſts his riches of Grace and Goodneſs towards them; and if it be not anſwered with ſome ſuitable walking, how doth the Lord interpret ſuch a neglect? He ſays they deſpiſe it. And to end this Uſe, let me take up ſome paſſages in that firſt of the *Proverbs*; it is ſaid, verſ. 24. *I have called, and you have refuſed; I have ſtretched out*

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my hand, and no man regarded: The Lord calls by his Word, and he calls by his Rod: He calls by his gentle dealings; his kinde uſage, his preſerving in a day of Calamity, is as much a Call, as the Calamity it ſelf; and he ſaith unto them that anſwer not this Call, and do not improve it aright, verſ. 26. *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.* They that are for a time unaffected, may have a time to be in diſtreſs, when they may ſtand in need of kindneſs to be ſhewed unto them, though they are preſerved and kept alive. Verſ. 32. *The turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay them, and the proſperity of fools ſhall deſtroy them:* If men turn away from the Calls of God, not anſwering his expectation, either under Preſervations, or his more ſevere dealings, *their turning away ſhall ſlay them, and their proſperity ſhall deſtroy them.* Some think, it may be, becauſe they are yet in proſperity, there is no farther hazard: but God ſaith their proſperity ſhall prove their deſtruction, and bring forth Conſequences, more ſad it may be, then any of which they were afraid in the day when diſtreſs hung over their heads. That is what I would ſay to the third Uſe from this point. A fourth Uſe is this:

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USE IV.

If the Lord should be beautiful and glorious unto those that escape, I would here apply my self unto a Soul that may be tender and jealous over it self, and fear lest after its escape Christ should not be rendered glorious unto it as he ought. Some there are that take no pains to consider how things are, and whether they go well or ill, that is not the thing that much engages their hearts: others are jealous over their Spirits, knowing something the treachery of their hearts, they are always apt to doubt and fear. A Soul that knoweth how precious Christ ought to be, and beautiful in its eye, fears lest after such kindness received from *Christ*, it should not see that beauty in him, nor be taken with him as it ought: May this be the case of any one of us at present? I would speak four or five things that may be seasonable and helpful to the Soul in this case.

1. Such is the Glory and Beauty of *Christ*, that no Soul under Heaven is able to see him in all his Glory, nor to admire him according to all those blessed Perfections wherewithal Christ is cloathed. That expression may be heeded by you. *Ephes.* 3. 8. where the Apostle, speaking of Christs glory, calls it,

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The unſearchable Riches of Chriſt; it is an Ocean without a bottom, that cannot be fathom'd by him that ſearches into it moſt accurately and exactly; it is like the Mines, the bottom of whom is not found out, though men have digged in, and fetched Treaſure from them, for a long time together: Let not a poor Heart think it is at preſent in a capacity of valuing of Chriſt according to all his Worth and Excellency, for that the Soul cannot fully know. What is ſpoken of God, I may allude to, and apply to *Chriſt*, Job 11.7. *Canſt thou by ſearching finde out God? canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection? it is as high as Heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper then Hell, what canſt thou know? the meaſure thereof is longer then the Earth, and broader then the Sea:* Such are the glorious Perfections of this Branch of the Lord, ſhould we meaſure and gueſs at him according to the excellency found in any created being, alas it would be infinitely ſhort; there is in Chriſt that Excellency that doth exceed and much out-do whatever glory is found upon any thing our eyes behold. Shall I ſay, As *Solomon* in his glory did out-ſhine the glory of all the Princes that were on earth in his time, ſo, and infinitely more, doth the glory of Chriſt out-do whatever our eyes behold, or whatever our hearts

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can conceive of? and in our ſearching into his perfections, we may come to do as the Queen of *Sheba* did, when ſhe beheld the glory of *Solomon*, ſhe gave this teſtimony, What ſhe had heard was true: So may we give this teſtimony of Chriſt, That what we have heard of his Perfections, there is all in him, nay, the one half was not told us: and if the Queen of *Sheba* was amazed, at ſtanding before *Solomons* glory, how much more may we at Chriſts, although we cannot ſee him in all his Perfections. Thou canſt not know him at preſent in this life, according to all that Glory with which he is cloathed.

2. If thou that art eſcaped art jealous that Chriſt is not become beautiful enough unto thee; Remember that the higheſt pitch unto which the Soul can come in this life, is, to deſire to ſee more of that beauty that is in him: The higheſt pitch in any thing that is good in this life, is to deſire to be better: The Deſires of the Soul do out-go in this life any Acts that it is able to put forth. *David*, in the caſe of Holineſs, the higheſt pitch of his Holineſs is expreſſed in his deſire, *Pſalm* 119.5. *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes!* he did keep them in ſome meaſure, but the higheſt pitch unto which he got, was to deſire to keep them better: ſo

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also *Psal.*68.11. *Teach me thy ways, O Lord, I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy Name:* he was sensible that his heart did in some things wander from God, he did not fear him as he should, but the highest of his attainment lay in his desires. *Paul* was a man very excellent in his day, and doubtless did know and enjoy much of *Christ*, yet the highest pitch he attained, was largeness of heart, and workings of desire, expresst in *Phil.*3.13. *This one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press towards the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus:* the desires of his heart were large. And so the Spouse hath an high esteem of Christ, she expresses the value she hath of him at a great rate, *Cant.*2.3,4. *As the Apple-Tree among the Trees of the Wood, so is my Beloved among the Sons; I sat down under his shaddow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste; stay me with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples, for I am sick of love:* her heart was much taken with Christ, seeing a great deal of Beauty in him; but you shall see her desires did out-do any act she could put forth; and therefore (*Cant.*4.16.) she says, *Awake, O North Wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out:* she would have her heart

heart enlarged, her Graces acted more ſtrongly. Now Soul, take in this for thy comfort, it is a good frame that thou deſireſt to prize Chriſt more, and have this Branch of the Lord more glorious in thy account, though thou canſt not put forth ſuch acts as thou wouldeſt: Remember thou art in that frame that the beſt of Saints have been in.

3. Conſider this, thou that art eſcaped, and feareſt that the Branch of the Lord is not become ſo glorious as it ſhould be; Remember that jealouſie over thy heart, is a good ſign, and gives ſome hope that Chriſt hath gotten ſome ground upon thee: The wiſe man, *Prov.* 14.15. ſaith, *The ſimple believeth every word, but the prudent man looks well to his going:* Some are ſo ſimple to believe every good word their hearts ſpeak; if they find any thing that looks like good, they are apt to conclude that all is right: therefore the wiſe man (*Prov.* 28.14.) ſaith, *Happy is the man that feareth always:* I apply it unto this; It is a good thing ſometimes to bear a jealouſie, a conſtant jealouſie over the heart, leſt it ſhould not be wrought up to that pitch it ought. The Author to the *Hebrews* gives us a warrant for holy jealouſies and fears, leſt we ſhould fall ſhort: They that have been moſt confident of the goodneſs of the frame of their ſpirits, have ſometimes

times been in none of the best: *Jehu* cries, *Come see my Zeal for the Lord of Hosts*, when he had not one grain of true Zeal for the Lord of Hosts in him.

4. Thou that wouldest have this Branch of the Lord glorious, if thy heart work really this way; Know this, thou art accepted in this thy desire: It will pass for a good improvement of this mercy of thy Escape. I confess some things there are, which I find the Lord is angry at; He loves not to see souls sit down satisfied and pleased in ways of sin, therefore he doth reflect upon them, *Psal.* 1. 1. that *sit in the seat of the scornful*; he is much angry with them that can contentedly take up in ways of sin, and therefore you find him falling foul upon them that harden their hearts in ways of sin, and also with those that content themselves with little measures of Grace, when they have means to rise up unto greater: He rebukes the Disciples, *Mat.* 8. 26. for the littleness of their Faith, *O ye of little Faith*; he upbraids them with the littleness of their Faith, because he had long been with them himself, as he doth hint unto them afterwards; *Have I been so long with thee, and yet thou hast not known me?* But this observe also, That where there is but a lesser measure of Grace, if the heart be really working

ing after more, it is accepted, and Christ receives it with good will: The best instance I know in the whole Bible, is that in *Mark* 9.23,24. where the Father of a Child possessed with a dumb Spirit comes unto *Christ* for cure; Christ tells him, *All things are possible unto him that believeth*, and straightway he cried out, and said with tears, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*: he had a little Faith, and desired more; therefore you find Christ doth not reject his little, but hears him, and calls unto the dumb Devil to come forth of his Child: So if thou complainest that Christ is not exalted in thy heart to any great degree, but thou longest he should be more; believe it, it shall be accepted: as it is said in another case, 2 *Cor.* 8.12. *If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*: Thus if really thou wouldest have Christ become more glorious unto thee, thou mayst be accepted in this which thou hast, and it shall not be charged upon thee that thou art wanting in that which thou yet hadst not. Under the Law, when a Thank-Offering was to be returned, and the Soul to admire the Lord in some kindness received, he that could bring but two Turtle Doves, and two young Pigeons, if that were the most they had, and the best they could bring,

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it was accepted as well as those that brought the greatest Offerings; their hearts were enlarged, it is like, to bring more: So though thou hast but little, if thou desirest more, thy little will be accepted, though but two Turtle Doves, or two young Pigeons.

5. Thou that wouldest prize Christ more, know this, That the Lord will increase that Grace in thee; and thou shalt be able to prize him at a greater rate: *The Lord direct your hearts into the Love of God*, 2Thes. 3. 5. it is the Lord that must direct thee into the Love of Christ, and he will do it, if thy heart be really working that way; if thou dost prize him as much as thou canst, he will help thee to prize him more. *Prov.* 3. 9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst with new Wine*: If thou dost with the first and best of thy strength, endeavour to honour the Lord, he will encrease thy strength, and communicate unto thee abundantly. And that is what I shall say to the fourth Use.

USE V.

To any such Soul as can say it is escaped, and the Branch of the Lord is become glorious unto it; I fear these Souls go into a

little room, there are but few of that sort, yet here and there some I confidently believe there are. I would all to whom this Book may come, might say they find their Escaping-Mercy hath been seconded with such an effect. In a word, and but a word or two, to this sort of persons: Ah what is thy mercy, O Soul! an Escape, and the good of it too, this is Mercy indeed! to be delivered from the pit of Corruption, and to be delivered in love to thy Soul; What is thy Duty? Truly,

1. To admire the faithfulness of the Lord, in keeping Covenant with thee; It is a special Blessing and Promise of the New Covenant, That God will not shew his People kindness onely, but will also give them the good of that kindness that he sheweth to them. To be saved in a day of Distress, and thy spirit bettered also, look on it as a mercy more then Preservation, without which thy Preservation might have been imbittered unto thee: O celebrate his praises, as a *God that keeps Covenant and Mercy, and will not alter the good word that he hath spoken to thee.*

2. Let this incourage thee to press after prizing Christ more; as *Paul* speaking of the *Corinthians*, *You love the Lord Jesus, see you abound yet more and more*; so say I, O labour

bour to abound more and more: Let this goodneſs by which you are brought to prize him, engage you to prize him more and more.

3. Communicate thy Experience unto trembling Saints, ſpeak to them of his gracious dealings unto thee, that their hearts may be incouraged to truſt in him: *Come*, ſaith *David*, *and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my Soul*: We have experience, every one of us, of what God hath done upon our Bodies, O let us be careful to ſhew forth his praiſe. That is what I ſhall ſay unto the fifth Uſe. Again,

USE VI.

I might ſpeak a word to another ſort of perſons: If eſcaping a Day of Calamity ſhould cauſe a Soul to ſee a greater Beauty in Chriſt, what ſhould it work upon them on whom the Calamity is fallen, and yet are eſcaped? There are many ſuch, if you that read what I have written, meet with them, and know them, you may do well to give them a little account of what may be ſpoken in ſuch a caſe: How ſhould that kindneſs be admired, when poor Creatures have had Bodies full of pain, Spirits full of fear, looking the King of Terrours in the face e-

very moment; poor Creatures that it may be would have given, had they had it, all the world, to have been assured they should have been raised from their Bed, and set upon their Feet; poor Creatures that it is like were sequester'd from company, whose case was like that of *David*, Psal. 38.11. *My Lovers and my Friends stand aloof from my sore, and my Kinsmen stand afar off:* Now that the Lord should be with and look after them, in such a time, and raise them, this should have such effects as such a mercy had once upon *Hezekiah*, Isa. 38.15. *I shall go softly all my years, in the bitterness of my Soul*; that is, I shall retain a sence of the bitterness that was upon my Soul, and in that sence I shall go softly; the man that walks softly, step by step, he goes heedfully and carefully, and mindes every step he takes; so should such poor Souls walk, that have been delivered from such hazard and bitterness of Soul; they should walk warily the rest of their time: To which, two things may much engage.

1. That certainly the Escape, in such a case, is thorow Christ: I am satisfied in this, That this Judgement of the Plague, as other Diseases, hath in it natural Causes, and natural Means are helpful to deliver from it; but as it is in other cases, whatever natural

natural Causes there are to further any Disease upon the Body of Man, the Lord hath a hand in it, and makes use of those natural Causes; and so whatever Means are useful for recovery in any case, the blessing and efficacy of it depends upon the Lord; so it is in this case also very eminently, that a Soul may say as it is said *Isa.*38.16. *O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my Spirit*; some read the words, *They shall live for whom the Lord is*, which is a great variation from our Translation: *They shall live for whom the Lord is*; that is, whose protection he is, and whom he stands by.

2. If Christ be not glorious to such a Soul, he can bring a worse evil upon them; *John* 5. 14. *Go away, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee:* God can bring a worse thing upon a Creature then the Plague, he can make death to be chosen rather then life; as you have it, *Jer.*8.3. *And death shall be chosen rather then life, by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family*, &c.

USE VII.

Should a souls escaping publick Calamity, render Christ the more glorious? Surely it should have this effect upon those into whose Walls it came, into whose House it entered,

and yet it may be their Persons not touched but have been preserved, though Death was gotten within their Walls. This hath been the case of many; if of any here, it should strike deep upon the heart, and make us sensible how much we owe unto Christ; how glorious should He become unto us! what defence was the security of a poor Creature in such a time? it was not Walls, it was not distance of place, but the hand of Christ: doubtless it hath been unto many something according to that word, *Luk.* 7. 34, *&c. There shall be two in one Bed, the one shall be taken, and the other left:* Two in one Family there have been, it may be, the one taken, the other left; yea, possibly two in one Bed, the one taken, the other untouched; this hath been a Case of rich Mercy, and certainly should engage the Soul much to prize him: *Psal.* 107. 14, 15. *O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men!* Doubtless such a Soul must say as *David*, *It was compassed about with the shadow of Death*; it was in a state of darkness, an uncomfortable time to them whose Persons were possibly untouched, and a wonderful work of God it was to keep one, while others were cut down. Now this should work up the heart to admire the Lord.

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USE VIII.

But then in the eighth place, If every escaping-One should see that Christ is become glorious unto him; How should it be with those whose Houses were compassed possibly round about, and Death very near them, but yet the hand of God entered not into their Walls? My Brethren, it is promised as a peculiar favour, *Psal.*91.10. *No Plague shall come nigh thy dwelling:* It is something not to have it come unto thy person, and not to have it come into thy dwelling, that neither thy self, nor any within thy Wall, have a hair of their heads touched; nay, possibly thou hast been within the hearing of the cryings and groans of dying ones, doubtless many have; and when *They* have cried for a little longer time, to be intrusted with a little more liberty in this World, for Eternity, and everlasting Concernments, it hath been denied *Them*, but granted unto *Thee* and *Me*; and when the hand of God hath been round about, it hath not come within thy Door; Oh who hath been the Keeper of thy door and mine! When many have been in the bitterness of their Souls bemoaning the loss of this and that Relation; Parents, of Children; Children, of

Parents; some Husbands and Wives wailing and lamenting for one another: What mercy is it that a Soul can say, It is well with me and mine, that no evil hath come nigh them! I tell thee Soul, these are things that should exceedingly engage thy heart to Christ, and should prevail much to the setting him up in thy Soul. This should be the resolution of every one partaking in this mercy, To use it for the exalting of Christ.

USE IX.

A Use to those that Christ hath carried from place to place, and so have been preserved: Think not thy self the less indebted unto Christ, for his kindness towards thee; He is to be as glorious unto such, as to any: let it not lessen the mercy, that thou hast not seen the dismal sight, and heard the doleful cries of them into whose Windows Death hath entred. I know we are apt not to be affected, or at least very little, with things that our eyes do not see, and our ears hear; but that is an evil frame: and certainly though our abode may not have been in the time of this Distress, in the heat of it, in the midst of it; yet we owe our preservation unto Christ, as much as any, and ought to see that it have influence upon us as much as any; and that, 1. Con-

1. Conſidering it doth not leſſen but heighten the mercy, that thou art not onely preſerved from falling, but from partaking in that bitterneſs and trouble of ſpirit that hath certainly born down many who have lived in the heat of this Diſtreſs. Days of Slaughter and Calamity, are days of heart-trouble to them that are preſerved in the midſt of them; *Jer.*30.5,6. *For thus ſaith the Lord, We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace; ask ye now, and ſee whether a man doth travel with Child; wherefore now do I ſee every man with his hands on his loyns, as a woman in travel, and all faces are turned into paleneſs?* It is ſpoken with reſpect to ſome that lived in times and places when and where ſlaughtering-Judgements were abroad; and they that were alive, what was the horror & perplexity of their ſpirits! Do not think, Soul, but thou art the more engaged to Chriſt, that he hath graciouſly carried thee out of the ſight and noiſe of thoſe direful out-cries: Many can ſay, We could hardly paſs the Streets but meet with Coffins, and hear the cries and complaints of Friends bereft of their Relations; bleſs the Lord, that he kept thee from the hearing of this: Not but that Chriſt can make the hearing and ſeeing ſuch things, turn greatly to advantage; but yet it is a piece of tenderneſs,

derneſs, if Chriſt will do the Soul good at ſome cheaper rate.

2. Conſider thou couldſt not have found ſhelter any where, had not Chriſt led thee thither: as it is not good to go without Chriſts leading us, nor could we have gone any where, if the Lord had not made our way for us: *Prov.6.9. A mans heart deviſeth his way, but the Lord directeth his ſteps:* Many were conſidering whither to go, and what to do, and laid their deſigns, but if the Lord did not order their ſteps, they could do nothing. You have a notable word, *Job* 3.23. *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in? Job* was incompaſſed with ſad diſtreſſes, and he would fain have gotten out of them, but ſaith he, *My way is hid*, (he knew not whither to fly) *I am hedged in*, I muſt ſtay by it. This hath been the caſe of many, their ways have been hedged in; and he could have hedged in thee and me, if ſo it had pleaſed him: and therefore if you and I have been carried unto places where we have been preſerved, let us admire the goodneſs of the Lord: *Jonah roſe up to flee to Tarſhiſh from the preſence of the Lord*; but he could not, the Lord hindred him. To which adde alſo,

3. Chriſt could have found thee with the Sword, whereſoever thou hadſt gone: therefore

fore let not thy preſervation at a diſtance rob Chriſt of his honour, but ſee his hand in it, and know that it hath been his work; and ſee that he be thereby rendered more beautiful and comely in thine Eyes.

USE X.

A tenth Uſe may be to Sinners that are eſcaped: You are preſerved, it's true, and Chriſt, this Branch of the Lord, ſhould be glorious unto you: If thou art yet in a ſtate of ſin, I would ſay unto thee four or five things:

1. Though thou art eſcap'd, Chriſt is not become glorious unto thee: a Soul in its natural condition ſeeth no Glory and Beauty in Chriſt; it is the work of Faith that opens the Eyes to ſee Chriſts Glory and Excellency, 1 *Pet.*2.7. *To you that believe he is precious:* Though it be thy Duty, thou canſt not live up to it; thy Eyes are blind, faſt cloſed, and the Glory of Chriſt is not diſcerned by thee: this therefore is thy miſery, thou haſt not anſwered the Lords expectation in this eminent preſervation. Sinners cry as they, *Iſa.*53.2. *We ſee no form nor comlineſs in him, nor Beauty, for which we ſhould deſire him:* the Sinners Eyes are faſt cloſed, that though this be thy Duty, thou canſt not ſee it. Nor

2ly. Canſt

2ly. Canſt thou interpret thy Preſervation to be out of good will to thee: *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things ſhall work together for good unto them that love God*; but thou doſt not love the *Lord*, nor art thou the *Called of the Lord*, thou art ſtill in thy ſin, and for the preſent canſt not interpret this diſpenſation to be in kindneſs: what may be in the heart of God, what ſecret purpoſe he may have, how he may deſign hereafter to bring thee near unto himſelf, thou canſt not tell, it is hidden for the preſent; and yet thou canſt not ſee there is any good intended thee in thy preſervation: and this is ſad, it exceedingly robs the Soul of the ſweetneſs of ſuch a diſpenſation, when it cannot be took to be in kindneſs. And

3ly. If thou art a Sinner, thou wilt uſe thy preſervation to a wrong end: Sinners, if they ask mercy, it is uſually to wrong ends; and if they receive mercies, they improve them ſinfully; *Pſal.* 78. 18. *They tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their luſt*; they asked a mercy, but it was for their luſt, and they did as ſadly improve it, verſ. 28, 29, 30. *And he let it fall in the midſt of their Camp, ſo they did eat, and were well filled, for he gave them their own deſire; they were not eſtranged from their luſt, but while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon*

upon them, &c. Thus it will be with thee, Soul, if thou art yet in thy Sin; it is true, thou art preſerved, but it will be to a farther miſery; thou haſt asked it to ſinful ends, and wilt uſe it ſinfully, and ſo bring a curſe upon thy ſelf. This is the miſery of a poor Soul in ſin, he ſpoils his Mercies, and brings down the wrath of God upon himſelf. To which add,

4ly. If thou remaineſt in ſin, the time is coming when thou wilt certainly give a ſad accompt of this mercy thou haſt received, and wilt really fall under a diſpenſarion much more ſad then that from which thou art now delivered: *Chriſt will come in flaming fire, and render vengeance unto them that know not God, nor obey the Goſpel of Chriſt*, the great intent of which, is the exalting of Chriſt. Now when by all means thou haſt not been provoked to anſwer this end; what will the reſult and iſſue of all be, but the rendring vengeance unto thee, and the wrapping thee up in eternal miſery? I would therefore ſay unto a Soul in ſin, What wilt thou do? thou art a dying creature; though thou haſt eſcaped this ſtorm, and art in ſafety to day, Eternity will ſoon come upon thee: Ah what wilt thou do? Soul, thy great work lyeth in two things, I will but even name them: Firſt, Go unto the Lord, that he would

would open thy eyes to see thy own misery, and Christ in his glory, that he would anoint thine Eyes with his Eye-salve, that may cause the scales of ignorance to fall from them, so as that thou mayst see thy self and Christ, aright: Secondly, Beg that thou mayst have a heart to give up thy self to Christ, that the glory thou seest in him, may make thee restless until thou hast taken hold of him, without which thou canst not walk comfortably, though thou art preserved, nor canst thou cheerfully look another time of trouble in the face, and much less that time when thou shalt be going to thy long home.

USE XI.

One Use more: Should the Branch of the Lord be glorious unto Escaping Ones? It then adviseth all earnestly to press after such a Spirit: I have two or three things to say, by way of motive, and so proceed to the second Note or Doctrine.

1. Consider what a Preservation it is thou hast; it is not thy Estate, thy Liberty, thy Name, but thy Life; *and Skin for Skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his Life:* If thou sayest as *Job*, *What is my life, that I should hope?* If I live, I may live in trouble, Distress is like to attend the Servants of *God*; there-

therefore why ſhould I make ſuch reckoning of my life? To that I ſay, It is true, diſtreſs may be the portion of the Lords People; yet thy Life is a mercy; thou mayſt out-live, or live above the diſtreſſes of the People of God; or, at leaſt, while thou haſt life, thou haſt hope, and time, and an opportunity to get into more intimate acquaintance with Jeſus Chriſt, to be at work about thy everlaſting concernments, for which reaſon mainly life is to be valued; It is thy Life that is given thee for a prey: and this ſhould make thee greatly to value and prize the Lord Jeſus, that gives thee ſuch preſervation.

2. Conſider how many, of Spirits more excellent, of Hearts more enlarged, of greater uſe in their places, that have been more ſerviceable unto Chriſt and his Intereſt, then thou haſt been, have yet fallen, and thou preſerved: Should not this mercy wonderfully affect thine heart? Yea,

3. Take this, that the more thou ſeeſt of the Glory of Chriſt, and the more he gains in eſteem upon the Soul, the more the Soul doth gain; it is gain, yea great gain, great riches for the Soul to improve in its eſteem of *Chriſt*: Is not Chriſt the great thing the Goſpel preſents, that every Soul ſhould be ſeeking after? Now the more thou haſt of him

him in thy heart, the more thou haſt of true Treaſure, of Riches that are truly ſo called. To which add,

4. That if Chriſt do not become glorious unto us, the time is haſtening when he will be glorious in the eſteem of others: He will have glory, no thanks unto us. Certainly it is not long, but Chriſt will make himſelf glorious, and get himſelf a Name and Praiſe; and all theſe ſlaughtering Providences they do but tend to that end. Chriſt is at work, though in the dark as to us, and we cannot ſee his out-goings; yet he is really working out his own advancement, and will make all theſe end in his own glory: Which leads me unto the ſecond *Doctrine* from the *Words*.

The

The Second Doctrine.

That the Iſſue of all Slaughtering-Judgements ſhall be the making Chriſt glorious; and that glory that ſhall be put upon the Head of Chriſt, ſhall tend to the Good and Benefit of thoſe of Iſrael that ſhall eſcape the Slaughter.

THis Truth lieth as plainly in the Words as may be; and for the proſecution of it, I ſhall propound this plain method:

Firſt, To ſhew you that in days of ſlaughter all the *Iſrael* of God may not eſcape: Some of them may, but others may fall.

Secondly, That the reſult of the ſlaughter, whoever ſtands or falls, ſhall be for the raiſing up Chriſt and his glory, for the getting him a Name.

Thirdly, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you what glory ſhall be brought to Chriſt in the end and iſſue of the ſlaughters that ſhall be made in the World. And

Fourthly, That all the glory that ſhall be put upon the head of Chriſt, ſhall be in mercy

unto those of *Israel* that out-live and escape the Distresses that shall break in upon the World. And then

Fifthly, The Application will follow.

First, To begin then with the first, *viz. That in days of slaughter all the Israel of God possibly may not escape; some of them may fall to the ground:* That is clearly intimated in the Text, *The Branch of the Lord shall be glorious to THEM that ARE escaped of Israel*; strongly holding out to us, that some among *Israel* may fall. I need say nothing to confirm this Truth, but onely refer you to our sad experience this day: I might bid you go round unto all the Churches of Christ in and about the great City, and ask them how it hath fared with the Saints of God this day; doubtless you will find every of them reckoning up their Slain, and those that have fallen by the Sword of the Angel: I might bid you go unto every Soul that knows God in truth, in and about this City, and see what account they will give you; I am perswaded you would find almost every of them making some or other sad complaint for the loss of such and such a Christian Friend, and such a one that feared the Lord, with whom they had much intimacy and acquaintance: this is the general cry among the Saints this day.

day. But a little, that these proceedings of God may not startle you; you shall finde some footsteps of like dealings in the days of old, that God hath not walked in an untrodden path, but a course he hath sometimes taken in days and times past. Sometimes in Scripture you find the Lord threatning of, and cutting down onely the Uncircumcised Ones, the profane Nations and People of the earth; thus *Ezek.* 32. you have a long Catalogue of the dreadful Judgements of God upon men uncircumcised, from ver. 20. to vers. 30. where he tells you that many of the barbarous Nations that knew not God, *are gone down to the pit, being slain with the sword*; and he concludes, *vers.* 30. *There be the Princes of the North, all of them, and the Zidonians, which are gone down with the slain, with their terrour; they are ashamed of their might, and they lie uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword, and bear their shame with them that go down to the pit*, &c. At other times you find the Lord dealing with his own People, as with the uncircumcised, and laying them together under the same Calamity and Distress; *Jer.* 9. is a famous instance, *vers.* 25. *Behold, the days come saith the Lord, that I will punish all them which are circumcised, with the uncircumcised*: God tells us plainly there are such times in which

his own People and others may fare alike; Calamities and Distresses may make no distinction; it may be in some measure unto the Saints as it is to the Sinners. You shall find the Lord in Scripture sometimes threatens as heavy things against his *Israel*, as against any, *Jer.* 14. the Prophet begins to beg mercy for *Israel*, *O the Hope of Israel*, ver. 8. *the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble! why shouldst thou be as a Stranger in the Land, and as a way-faring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night?* in which words he seems to intimate that it would be a strange thing, a strange way of proceeding, if God should turn against his People; if thou art the Saviour of thy People, wilt thou yet turn thy hand against *Israel*, to whom thou hast been known as a Saviour? but God stopt the mouth of the Prophet, vers. 11, 12. *Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for this People for their good; when they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt-Offerings, and an Oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Pestilence:* This very *Israel* unto whom God was sometimes known as a Saviour, yet at this time he took up a resolution concerning them, that he would come out against them and consume them by his sore Judgements. So *Ezek.* 33. God threatens some

ſome that out-lived and eſcaped ſome Diſtreſſes, verſ. 27. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, As I live, ſurely they that are in the Waſtes ſhall fall by the Sword, and him that is in the open Field will I give unto the Beaſts to be devoured, and they that be in the Forts and in the Caves ſhall die of the Peſtilence*; This is ſpoken of *Iſrael*: And thoſe of Iſrael that as yet were not carried away captive, God comes out againſt them with this purpoſe and determination, that though they did remain and were preſerved, they ſhould at length fall. So *Jer.* 44. 13. ſome there were that in the time of *Iſrael*'s Captivity, fled into *Egypt* for refuge, and what ſays he? *I will puniſh them that dwell in the Land of Egypt, as I have puniſhed Jeruſalem, by the Sword, by the Famine, and by the Peſtilence*: obſerve, God ſometimes puniſheth *Jeruſalem*, the Seat of his own People, with theſe great and ſore Judgements: Sometimes if his own People ſhall think to take Sanctuary, and refuge themſelves here and there, it ſhall not avail, but the hand of the Lord ſhall overtake them. Let me tell you, not onely ſome of Gods *Iſrael* may fall by ſlaughter, but ſome of the principal of his People, ſome of the choice ones of the flock; *Jer.* 25. 34, 35. *Howl ye Shepherds, and cry, and wallow your ſelves in the Aſhes, ye principal of the*

Flock; for the dayes of your Slaughter, and of your Diſperſion are accompliſhed, and ye ſhall fall like a pleaſant veſſel, and the Shepherds ſhall have no way to flee, nor the Principal of the Flock to eſcape. We are apt to ſay, when we ſee God terrible in his doings to the children of men, and terrible in his dealings to his own People, What do theſe things mean? We are ready to look upon ſuch Providences as things uncouth, ſtrange and unheard-of; but we finde it is not out of the courſe and method that God hath obſerved heretofore. So that I may conclude in reſpect of common calamity, it ſometimes falls according to that, *Eccl.9.2. All things come alike unto all: there is one event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked; to the Good, to the Clean, and to the Unclean; to him that ſacrificeth, and to him that ſacrificeth not. As is the Good, ſo is the Sinner; and he that ſweareth, as he that feareth an Oath.*

But if the Reaſon be demanded, *How comes it to paſs, and whence is it, that any of God's Iſrael ſhould fall in times of ſlaughter?*

1. Not to inſiſt upon the Prerogative of God, (which might be the firſt thing) whereby he is Lord of all his Creatures, and his own People as well as others, and therefore may diſpenſe unto all according to the good-pleaſure of his own Will.

2. In

2. In the second place; the ground of it may be this, *viz.* That God cannot keep his Covenant with his People sometimes at any cheaper rate, he cannot be faithfull sometimes to his Promise with his own People, unless he let them feel some smarting Rod, and taste of that Cup of which he makes his Enemies drink a full Draught; God by Covenant stands bound to purge out the folly that is bound up in the hearts of his Children; and truly sometimes lusts in the Soul are like rust in Iron, deeply eat in, and cannot well be gotten out without some severe and ruff usage.

3. But thirdly, The main Reason, the grand and principal Ground why some of *Israel* may perish in times of common Calamity is this; they sin as the world, and so God leaves them to suffer with, and as the world; their provocations are like the wickeds, therefore he is pleased to suit out an external punishment, something like that that falls upon the rest of the world: the Lord saith, that sometimes the sin of his own People, is not onely as the sin of the world but greater; *Jer.* 5. 28. *They are waxen fat, they shine, yea they overpass the deeds of the wicked.* It is spoken of God's *Israel.* The truth is, though the sin of Saints shall never damn them, they are in-

tereſted in Chriſt, and *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 8. 1. (and herein is much of the overflowing Grace of the new Covenant, that notwithſtanding the ſin of Saints may have ſome ſuch provoking ingredients as the ſin of ſinners hath not, that yet ſinners ſhall periſh eternally under their ſins, but the Saints ſhall not come into condemnation) yet I ſay the ſin of a Saint may lay him under an external diſpenſation with the ſinner: the Saints ſin againſt ſuch light as few ſinners do, and ſuch love as no ſinner can, and that makes their provocation more provoking than the ſins of ſinners: When it is thus among the Lord's People, the Lord is pleaſed to let them, or ſome of them at leaſt, to fall by ſore ſlaughter. It is upon ſuch a ſuppoſition that God threatens his People in *Deut.* 28. 58. *If thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this Law that are written in this day, that thou mayeſt fear this glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD: Then the Lord will make thy Plagues wonderful, and the Plagues of thy ſeed, even great Plagues, and of long continuance, and ſore ſickneſs, and of long continuance.* The caſe ſuppoſed here is this, That God's People may not keep to the Law of the Lord, that they may not carry it like a people that know

know ſomething of God, that they may not carry it as a people that know what dread there is in the Name JEHOVAH, (which is a Name that ſpeaks the Great God able to meet with, & avenge himſelf on all them that walk not with him in Truth and Uprightneſs) that they may not carry it as thoſe that have intreſt in the Lord: Intreſt in the Lord doth not give a liberty unto ſin, but is the greateſt engagement unto Holineſs, and ſouls may forget that Obligation under which they lie, thoſe bonds of God that are upon them, that filial Child-like obedience which they are to render unto their Father, and upon ſuch defects God threatneth, as you have heard; Take his threatning in a few particulars, and you ſhall ſee what ſin may bring upon the Lord's own People: he threatneth, firſt, Plagues, yea, all kind of Plagues, Judgements of every ſort. 2dly, Such as ſhould be wonderfull, that ſhould be full of terrour and amazement unto all that look upon them; as God ſometimes ſpeaks to his People, and tells them he will *make them an aſtoniſhment to all round about them*, yea ſuch as ſhould make them a wonder unto themſelves. 3dly, He threatens they ſhould lie under Plagues of long continuance, year after year: we are apt to think a judgment muſt be terminated

to,

to, and ended in such a space of time; but God can stretch it out upon his own, even for a long season. 4thly, All the Judgements of *Egypt* shall come upon them, all the Judgements they were afraid of, and proved a terrour unto their souls. 5thly, They might fall under such Judgements as they had not heard, or at any time read of before; he would create trouble to them: Certainly if it be according to that word, *Lam.*3.33. that *the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men:* though they are but the children of men, the Lord doth not easily afflict them, not at every turn contend with them, much less will he upon light and slight occasions contend with his own People, and the choicest of his own; but when he finds them under provocations he is pleased thus to break out against them. Observe that where you find God coming out to cut off his People by a slaughtering stroke, you shall find some notable provocation was the procuring cause, it was not for nothing; *Deut.* 28.21. *The Lord shall make the Pestilence cleave unto thee, until he hath consumed thee from off the Land whither thou goest to possess it.* It was spoken to *Israel:* upon what occasion? the 15th verse will tell you; *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord*

Lord thy God, to observe to do all his Commandments, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day, that all these Curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee. And so *Ezek.* 5. 11, 12. *Wherefore as I live, saith the Lord God, surely because thou hast defiled my Sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations; therefore will I also diminish thee, neither shall mine eye spare, nor will I have any pity. A third part of thee shall die by the Pestilence, and with Famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee, and a third part shall fall by the Sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and will draw out a Sword after them, &c.* Here are dreadful threatnings, and it was upon great provocations; there were great turnings aside from God, corrupting his Worship, polluting his Sanctuary, the fire of God's jealousy burns hot about his Sanctuary; and if he find his People in the matter of his Worship corrupted, he breaks out against them with great severity: It was upon some such account *David* shunned the place, the high place at *Gibeon*, where the Plague was; he knew that he had deserved death, and therefore he could not go to *Gibeon*, for he was afraid because of the Sword of the Angel of the Lord, as you may see, 1 *Chron.* 21. 28. I may allude to

that,

that, *Ezek.* 18. 24. I know the words have another ſenſe than that that is before me, but I allude to them only; and as he ſaith, *When the Righteous turneth away from his Righteouſneſs, and committeth Iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, ſhall he live? all his righteouſneſs that he hath done ſhall not be mentioned: in his treſpaſs that he hath treſpaſſed, and in his ſin that he hath ſinned ſhall he die.* So I may ſay, when the Saints of God turn into wayes of ſinners, and act in like provocations with them, in the ſins they ſin, and the treſpaſſes that they commit, they may die, and the hand of the Lord may break out againſt them to the ſlaughtering of them, and cutting them down.

Obj. 1. If any ſhall object here and ſay, *If the Saints may be ſlaughtered by, and fall in common Calamity, what profit hath the Jew then, and what advantage is there by Circumciſion? what advantage hath the Saint above and beyond the Sinner?*

Anſw. To that I anſwer; He hath advantage many wayes; to name a few particulars:

1. Though one of God's *Iſrael* may fall by a ſlaughtering Judgment, yet he is in the leaſt danger of any one; he may fall as ſinners do, but he is in the leaſt danger; there

there is greater hope of his ſecurity than of thoſe that know not God: The Saints have the Spirit of God to lead them into his way and work, and therefore are not ſo eaſily left to run into thoſe ſins that may provoke God to cut them off by ſuch Judgments; all the Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God; Rom. 8. 14. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the Sons of God; & è contra:* a bleſſed Promiſe the Lord doth make in that 25*th Pſalm* unto his own People touching the guidance they ſhall have; *ver.* 12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord, him ſhall he teach in the way that he ſhall chuſe.* God here engageth himſelf not to leave his People to themſelves, to the ways and workings of their own hearts, but to direct them into his way; and when he hath them in his way, what then? *ver.* 13. *his ſoul ſhall dwell at eaſe*, or, as *Junius* tranſlates, *his ſoul ſhall dwell in good*; as if he ſhould ſay, when I guide my People into my ways, than evil ſhall not eaſily overtake them; but they ſhall dwel and reſt in good, and mercy ſhall compaſs them about; if they ſtep out of Gods way, the Lord knows how to call them back again; *Iſa.* 30. 21. *Thine ears ſhall hear a word behind thee, ſaying, This is the way, walk ye in it.* If the Saints have provoked God, there is a poſſibility

bility for them to make their peace, that the difference may not grow to any great height; they may compound the difference, and make up the breach, by a ſpirit of mourning and humiliation; they may lye at the foot of the Lord, and abhor themſelves in duſt and aſhes, and ſo make up the breach: and to this work they are fitted in ſome meaſure through Grace; nay, they have a Friend in Heaven that intercedeth for them; and though they have provoked God, the difference may be by him ſo mediated, that God may be ſtopped from coming forth in his hot Diſpleaſure. I make no doubt but the Lord may ſay concerning many of his People, as he doth of *Iſrael* of old in *Pſal.*106.23. *Therefore he ſaid he would deſtroy them, had not Moſes his choſen ſtood before him in the breach.* Doubtleſs our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that *Moſes*, he of whom *Moſes* was a type, and in this a great type, doth oftentimes ſtep in between the Lord and his People, and make up the Breach, and divert that Wrath that otherwiſe would come down in dreadful Judgments, to the cutting them off the Earth.

2. Though a Saint may fall into a calamity, yet it is advantagious to be a Saint in ſuch a day, for ſuch a one, though he fall, he ſhall be ſupported in his fall, and the curſe of

of the Judgment ſhall be taken off. God may chaſten his People with a Rod, let looſe the ſevereſt Judgments upon them. He may cut them down, but yet he muſt hold them by the hand; by Covenant he ſtands bound to give them ſtrength for every tryal; and bleſſed Experiences there have been of this kind this day, of thoſe Servants of God that have gone to their eternity by thouſands; There are them that have left this Teſtimony, *That God was with them in that hour*; and though the Judgement in it ſelf conſidered, had much of bitterneſs in it, yet God was pleaſed to ſweeten it to them by an abundant ſence of Divine Love: it is ſaid, *Pſal.* 149. 5. *Let the Saints be joyful in glory, let them ſing aloud upon their bed.* Some Saints are not only joyfull in Glory now they are with God, but have ſung aloud upon their ſick and death-beds, on which they have been caſt by this preſent Judgment of God, and declared to the praiſe of his Grace, that he did ſupport and chear their inward man by the enjoyment of his bleſſed refreſhing Preſence in that needful hour; and truly the curſe and ſting of ſuch a Diſpenſation is taken away from the Saints. Thus ſome interpret that word *Pſal.* 91. 10. *there ſhall no Plague come nigh their dwelling*; that is, ſay they, *the Plague*

of

of the Plague ſhall not come nigh their dwelling; the curſe of it ſhall not come, though the thing it ſelf come, God will take off the curſe, and that is the bitterneſs and ſting of any affliction: Death comes upon every man, Saint and Sinner; on the Wicked it comes with a ſting in its tayl, a curſe with it, it is an inlet for them into eternal miſery, falling under the everlaſting Diſpleaſure of the glorious God; the Saint dyeth too, but the curſe is taken off from him in his Death, his grave is his bed, where he reſts in peace, and that ſtroke only opens a door unto him into his Father's preſence. *Iſa.* 57. 2. *They ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs.* So 1 Cor. 15. 55. ſaith the Apoſtle, *O Death, where is thy ſting? O Grave, where is thy Victory?* The curſe of Death is taken away from the Saint; So though the Saint fall in and under ſuch a calamity, the ſting of it is ſo taken out, that it is but a bleſſed paſſage unto him into *Abraham's* boſom.

3. It is yet worth while to be of Gods *Iſrael* in a time of Slaughter, though one ſhould not eſcape the Slaughter, for this reaſon; That if a Soul go unto its Eternity by ſuch a Slaughter, God will yet thereby glorifie himſelf more, and make the fall of his Servants

Servants of greater uſe then their ſtanding on Earth could have been: be confident God reſolveth to make the moſt of every one of his People; they are precious unto him, and ſhall not lightly fall to the Earth; but if they do fall, it ſhall be becauſe he knows how to make their fall promote his glory: as in Martyrdom, the death of a Saint furthers the intereſt of Chriſt more then his living could do, and ſo it is here: God by this means vindicates his own Holineſs, when he lets a Saint fall in a Calamity, he doth abundantly evidence his own Holineſs; to the World, and let men ſee that if ſin be found in his own, he will puniſh it, and that ſharply, even to a temporal death; which is a high teſtimony of Gods purity and contrariety unto all ſin. A notable word you have *Exod.*23.20,21. *Behold, I ſend an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions, for my Name is in him:* Obſerve, the Angel here is the Lord Jeſus, who hath the command of Life and Death, he ſometimes cuts off ſome of his own People, becauſe ſin is found upon them; he will not pardon, but he will cut off, and why? The Name of the Lord is upon him; he muſt vindicate Gods

Honour, his Holineſs, and for this end lets ſome of his People fall: And truly this is uſe enough that God makes of his People, if he pleaſeth thus to deal with them. This in anſwer to my firſt Objection.

Obj. 2. *But how is the fall of Gods People in a common Calamity, conſiſtent with his Promiſe of ſpecial Preſervation? One ſuch Promiſe you have in that famous place, Pſal.*91. 9,10. Becauſe thou haſt made the Lord, which is my Refuge, even the moſt High, thy habitation; there ſhall no evil befall thee, nor ſhall any Plague come nigh thy dwelling: *and another ſuch-like Promiſe you have, Deut.*7.15. And the Lord will take away from thee all Sickneſs, and will put none of the evil Diſeaſes of Egypt, which thou knoweſt, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee: *How doth the Lords cutting off ſome of his People, conſiſt with theſe Promiſes?*

Anſw. To that I anſwer: Theſe Promiſes are conditional, as is evident, and if we keep not the condition annexed to thoſe Promiſes, God is not bound to fulfil them in the Letter: for that word in the 91ſt Pſalm, *No Plague ſhall come nigh their dwelling*, I have hinted already, that it may be taken otherwiſe then juſt according to the letter; and where he ſaith, *No Plague*, it may be taken thus,

thus, *The Plague of the Plague ſhall not come nigh thy dwelling*; the Cauſe of it, and wrath it, ſhall not come into thy dwelling; but take it as a Promiſe of ſpecial particular preſervation, and it is a Promiſe with a Condition; the Condition is in the 9th verſ. *Becauſe thou haſt made the Lord, which is my Refuge, even the moſt High, thy habitation:* The Condition is abundance of Faith, living in, and living upon God; and a little Unbelief, one ſtep awry in a way of Unbelief, may forfeit thy intereſt in, and good by this Promiſe, and that is ſoon done: It is a rare thing for a man to live in and upon the Lord, to make him our Habitation at all times: The Soul that doth not live up to the Condition, may forfeit the Mercy promiſed. As for that word, *Deut.* 7. it is a Promiſe on Condition alſo; the Condition of the Promiſe you find, verſ. 12. *Wherefore it ſhall come to paſs, if you hearken unto theſe Judgements, and keep and do them, that the Lord thy God ſhall keep unto thee the Covenant and the Mercy which he ſware unto thy Fathers:* but now if any of the Lords People be found turning aſide to *crooked paths, the Lord may lead them forth with the Workers of Iniquity*, to fall by the ſame ſtroke with them.

Obj. 3. If it be objected, *But theſe Dealings are not ſuitable unto the ancient Dealings*

of God with his own People: for God hath sometimes been wont to cut down Sinners but spare his Saints; Abraham *hints so much in his pleading with God*, Gen. 18. 23, 24, 25. Wilt thou also destroy the Righteous with the Wicked? peradventure there be fifty Righteous within the City, wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty Righteous that are therein? that be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked; and that the Righteous should be as the Wicked, that be far from thee; should not the Judge of all the Earth do right? *and also that* Exod. 12. 29, 30. *where God cuts off the first-born of* Egypt; from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his Throne, unto the first-born of the Captive that was in the Dungeon; *but not a hair of the head fell from any in* Israel, *and he cuts them off by the Plague.*

Answ. For answer to this, plainly thus: Let the Scriptures and Cases be rightly considered, and you shall find the answer easie: In that case, *Gen.* 18. where *Abraham* pleads for Mercy for *Sodom*, because of the Righteous, he doth suppose though *Sodom* was a wicked place, there might be many found in *Sodom*, that did not fall in with the abominations of that place, for which God was coming to destroy them; and by Righteous Ones,

Ones, he may mean thoſe that were free in agreat meaſure from the crying Abominations for which God was coming to puniſh: Now if the People of God do ſtand clear from all thoſe Abominations for which he contends with a People, then truly God will hardly cut them off; but if he find them committing the ſins for which he puniſheth, he may then ſuffer them to fall among them that fall: This was the caſe in *Egypt*, God comes forth to execute Judgements upon the Oppreſſors of his People, the guilt was not in them, they were onely the Sufferers; therefore being free from the Sin, God exempts them from any part in the ſuffering: Which may be enough for anſwer to that Objection.

*Obj.*4. If it be ſaid, *But Iſraels Fall hath diſappointed the Faith of many of the Lords People; have not many of the Saints verily believed that the Lords People ſhould not have been touched, but God would diſtinguiſh between them and others?*

Anſw. To that I anſwer, That the confidence and expectation of ſome may be made void, but God will not fail the Faith of any; God fails no mans Faith, if his Faith do not fail. There is a vaſt difference between Confidence, Expectation, and Faith; Faith is a rare thing, a choice Plant, and I believe

it doth not ſpring forth into act, even in the Garden of the Saints themſelves, as we are apt to imagine; we many times think a groundleſs Confidence real Faith. You ſhall find the expectation of a People may be fruſtrated; *Jer.*8.15. *We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, but behold trouble:* they did look for it, but ſuch an expectation muſt not be called by the name of Faith: Let me tell you, That nothing is Faith but that that is grounded upon a Word, *Pſal.*119.49. *Remember thy Word unto thy Servant, on the which thou haſt cauſed me to hope.* It is very hard to find any word in Scripture, where God doth abſolutely aſſure unto his People exemption in a ſlaughtering-Calamity, eſpecially until Chriſt ſhall come forth to execute Judgement upon the Earth. Therefore there not being a word for ſuch Faith, there cannot be a Faith of ſuch a diſtinction: Though men may call their vain expectations by the name of Faith, they ſhall never find it to have Faiths Efficacy.

Obj. 5. If it be further ſaid, *That by the falling of Gods Iſrael, the Lord croſſes and hinders his own deſign; he hinders the effect of the Judgement upon the Hearts of ſinners; their hearts come by this means to be the more hardned, and they thence conclude it is not intended*

and

and directed ſpecially againſt them; for, ſay they, The Good fall, as well as the Bad; and we are not intended more then others.

Anſw. To that I anſwer: What if God will, for the hardning the hearts of Sinners, let ſome of his own fall? What if that ſhall be one part of Gods deſign in it, that their hearts may be hardened, and thereby they may be the more ripened for their utter ruine and deſtruction? If God have this deſign in his heart, and will therefore be content to let ſome of his fall in a Calamity, who are we that we ſhould reply againſt God?

Obj.6. If, in the ſixth place, you ſhould ask me, *But what ſhall we ſay concerning thoſe of Gods Iſrael that are fallen? muſt we conclude them all fallen in their treſpaſſes, and cut off becauſe of ſome notable provocation that they ſtood guilty of?*

Anſw. I anſwer, No, in no wiſe; notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid: But my poor thoughts are theſe, That ſome of the Lords own Iſrael may have had too great a hand in, and may have ſtood under too much guilt with reſpect to ſome of the provocations of this day, and ſo may be fallen in their treſpaſſes; God may have cut them off from the Earth in ſome diſpleaſure, for ſome Abominations, in which they have been found,

though he may receive them to himself in glory: but I must say concerning others of the Lord's People this day fallen, and some of them have this witness in my soul, that surely the hand of God went not out against them for any speciall provocation upon them, but upon account of the accomplishing and bringing about some notable things that are in the heart of God, which time must manifest: therefore though the falling of many Saints may speak, that the Lord is displeased with his People, yet I would even say concerning many of them (and it may be a caution unto us) as Christ, *Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*; or those eighteen upon whom the Tower in *Shiloe* fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all others that dwelt in *Jerusalem*? I tell you nay, but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish: though many of the Saints may possibly have fallen through great provocations, yet surely for others we must not reckon them sinners above the rest of the Saints that remain.

Obj. 7. If it be asked, *May we conclude that all the Israel of God that have escaped, and may escape through Grace, that they do there-*

fore

fore escape because they have been found walking uprightly with God, in a constant exercise of Grace, do they therefore escape because they are found in right and good frames of soul?

To that I answer: Let us *not be high-minded, but fear.* Though possibly some of the Saints that stand, God hath found them in a right Spirit, and is therefore pleased to spare, yet for many of us we must put our preservation upon some other score; I would rather place it where the Spirit of God doth sometimes place the preservation of *Israel*, Psal. 78. *But he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquities; yea, many a time turned away his Anger, and did not stir up all his Wrath.* I do rather suppose that most of us that live, live through the grace and indulgence of a tender-hearted God, because he doth not stir up all his Wrath, rather than because we have been found in this right and excellent Spirit which this day calls for, and which of right should have been found upon us. And thus I have shewed that in dayes of slaughter all of *Israel* may not escape, and why.

I proceed now to the second Branch for prosecution of this Doctrine, to shew that whoever stand or fall, Christ will lose none of his glory, that all slaughtering-providences shall end in the making Christ glorious;

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In that day ſhall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious: that is, in that day when ſome great and dreadful Slaughters are brought to a concluſion; as is evident if you conſider and compare it with what goes before in the third chapter. Certainly a little light into Scripture is enough to ſatisfie us, that God hath brought forth many great things for his own glory and the good of his People, by ſlaughters; it were eaſie to obſerve unto you that moſt of the great things that God hath done for his Name and People, have been effected and brought about by great diſtreſſes: *Iſrael* were ſet free from their oppreſſion, which was an eminent mercy, and how? Slaughters were made to bring that about; *Exod.* 14. 13. *Moſes ſaid unto the People, Fear ye not, ſtand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of the Lord, which he will ſhew unto you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have ſeen to day, ye ſhall ſee them again no more for ever.* And you ſhall finde they were poſſeſſed of *Canaan*, ſetled in that good Land, but which way? it was by and through great ſlaughters; the Canaanite was diſperſed and driven out, and it was by cutting them off; yea, I do ſuppoſe that one of the means and wayes by which God made way for *Iſrael* to ſet them in *Canaan*, was by the Peſtilence; I gather it from that

Exod.

*Exod.*23.23. *My Angel ſhall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perriſites, and the Canaanites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites, and I will cut them off.* God ſaith he would ſend his Angel to do it. The Angels of God work many wayes; but that that is eminently called in Scripture the ſtroke of the Angel, it is that ſtroke by the Peſtilence, as many inſtances might make it good; and I the rather judge it to be the intent of the expreſſion, becauſe it is ſaid in verſ. 25. *You ſhall ſerve the Lord your God, and he ſhall bleſs thy bread and thy water, and I will take ſickneſs away from the midſt of thee:* The Angel ſhall cut off the Canaanites, but I ſhall take ſickneſs away from thee. And if you conſider what God hath promiſed to do for his People in the time to come, *Pſal.*103.6,7. you find cauſe to believe that this is the way that God delights to take; *The Lord executeth Righteouſneſs and Judgment for all that are oppreſſed; he made known his wayes unto Moſes, and his acts unto the children of Iſrael.* Mark, God ſaith he will act for his People, he will free them from oppreſſion, from bonds, and from troubles; but how? *He made known his wayes unto Moſes, and his acts to the children of Iſrael.* But you will ſay, *How?* I will tell you, and God hath told

you

you long ago; he told *Moſes* and *Iſrael*, not onely what he would do for them in their day, but what he would do, and how he would proceed for good unto his People in after-dayes. In the dayes of *Moſes* God wrought for his People and led them into much good by ſlaughter, and this is the way that God ſtill intends to take. *Pſalm 72.* entituled *A Pſalm for Solomon*, concerning the glory that was put upon *Solomon*: in the perſon of *Solomon* Chriſt is eminently intended, and his Glory and Government is eminently pointed at; obſerve which way it is that *Solomon* and *Chriſt* ſhall come to their Glory, and come to do good to his People; *He ſhall judge the Poor of his People, he ſhall ſave the children of the Needy, he ſhall break in pieces the Oppreſſors*; it is in a way of ſlaughter. So *Iſa.* 30. with abundance of Scriptures more that I might name, you ſhall find there what the Lord ſaith he will do; *There ſhall be upon every high hill, rivers and ſtreams of waters, in the day of the great ſlaughter, when the Towers ſhall fall:* Saith God, *there ſhall be a day of great ſlaughter*; What ſhall the ſlaughter do? *the Towers ſhall fall*; which are types and repreſentations of the high great things of this World, that ſeem to have great ſtrength, and to be almoſt impregnable:

ble: But *in the day of great ſlaughter the Towers ſhall fall:* And what will the effect thereof be? it will be glory to Chriſt, and good unto his People; ver. 26. *it is in the dayes that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his People, in which the light of the Moon ſhal be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun ſhall be ſeven-fold, as the light of ſeven days:* Thus will Chriſt glorifie himſelf and do his People good by ſlaughter. So *Iſa.* 34. 6. he gives you an account of dreadful ſlaughter, *The Sword of the Lord is filled with Blood, it is made fat with fatneſs, and with the Blood of Lambs and Goats, with the fat of the Kidneys of Rams: for the Lord hath a Sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great ſlaughter in the land of Idumea:* Here ſhall be great ſlaughter, and what ſhall be the effect of it? you ſhall ſee in the 12th verſ. *They ſhall call the Nobles thereof unto the Kingdom, but none ſhall be there, and all her Princes ſhall be nothing*; that is, the glory that ſhall come to Chriſt ſhall ſo out-ſhine and out-do the glory of all the great Ones of the World, that they ſhall be look'd upon as if they were not, his glory that ſhall come to him through the ſlaughter ſhall ſo ſurpaſs them in all their glory. I might add *Iſa.* 33. 10, &c. *The Earth mourneth and languiſheth, Lebanon is aſhamed and hewn down, Sharon is like a Wilderneſs, and*

Baſhan

Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits; Now will I arise, saith the Lord, now will I be exalted, now will I lift up myself: Now look what follows, and you shall find the way by which he will be exalted, it is through slaughter; *Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble, your breath as fire shall devour you, and the People shall be as the burning of Lime, as Thorns cut up, they shall be burnt in fire:* Ah my Friends! we may think our selves secure and out of danger, because upon our feet; but alas, Christ that is to make himself glorious, how easily is he able to pull down the pride of man, and to lay low his lofty looks? it is a notable word that you have *Job* 24.22, *&c. He draweth also the Mighty with his power; when He riseth up,* (mark, that is to plead his Cause) *no man is sure of his life; though it be given him to be in safety whereon he resteth, yet his Eyes are upon their Ways.* Men may think themselves safe and secure, and that which is their strength and confidence may be untouched for the present, but yet the Lords Eyes are upon their ways; and vers. 24. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought low, they are taken out of the way* (it is done in a little time) *as the tops of the Ears of Corn:* Those that stand in the way of Christs Exaltation, they are exalted, but it is but for a little while; and in a little while,

at ſhort warning, Chriſt can throw them down, and cut them off as the tops of the Ears of Corn. You know a little thing will ſtrike of the top of an Ear of Corn, when it is fully ripe; Chriſt can with a little ſtroke make all glory to periſh, that his own may be advanced. So that I ſay it is Chriſt's way and method to get himſelf glory, and do his People good by Slaughter; yea, let me tell you, This Plague and Peſtilence is a means by which God will work out his own glory; We, it may be, look upon it as a thing that comes of courſe once in forty years, or ſuch a matter; but truly this is a ſad miſtake, and in the 89th *Pſalm*, a Pſalm in which *David* is much concerned, but in and under the Perſon of *David*, Chriſt is intended; and God when he promiſeth the Kingdom to *David*, that he would ſecure the Kingdom unto him, he intends Chriſt eſpecially, that he would make Chriſt great and glorious in the World; and which way will he do it? verſ. 23. *And I will beat down his Foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. Junius* renders the word thus, *Oſores ejus plagâ afficiam*; we may tranſlate it, *I will ſmite them that hate him*: for, *plaga*, a ſtroke, is put for any kinde of ſtroke or ſmiting, but properly and more eſpecially, for this Judgment of the Plague; and I think ſo it is to

be

be taken here; I will send this Judgement abroad, that I may cut off and take away the haters of my Son, that I may establish him in the glory that I have designed for him. To which add *Hab.* 3.2. where the Prophet petitions the Lord, *O Lord, I have heard thy speech and was afraid; O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy: God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran, his glory covered the Heavens*; (that is, God came forth to work the Exaltation of his Son) and what course doth he take in order to it? vers. 5. *Before him went the Pestilence, and burning Coals went forth at his feet*: The Pestilence is here called a fore-runner of Christs Exaltation; he sends it before him to make room and way for himself, though we possibly, and our capacities are too shallow to conceive how it should be brought about: It is possible, if God let us stand upon the Earth some few years, we may be much more enlightened in this matter, and may see that God was this day eminently working to that end.

And that is what I would say to that Head; That Slaughter, and slaughtering-Judgements, work for and shall end in the making Christ glorious.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, What is that glory that shall be put on Christ in the issue and end of these things?

I answer in a few particulars:

1. The Essential Glory of Christ, in the day of his Glory, shall be more abundantly seen and discovered then now it is, and shall take more upon the hearts of all Persons. Christ is as glorious in his Essential Glory as can be, for he is infinitely glorious, and more then infinite cannot be imagined; but this Glory may be discover'd and manifested beyond what it is: The Sun is always a glorious Body, but you know the light of it is hid many times, Clouds stand between, and we cannot see it at some times as we can at others. Christ is exceedingly glorious, but little of his Glory hath been hitherto manifested to the Children of Men; more Eyes shall see it, and more Hearts be taken with it then at this day. Something of Christs Glory is seen already by the Saints, who have a spiritual Eye, they see that that takes their Hearts, and makes them cry out, as the Spouse sometimes doth, *He is altogether lovely*: Some of the Saints see that in Christ which is more to them then all that is in this World; they take more comfort and content in it, more of joy and satisfaction to their Spirits. When Christ came in the

Fleſh, it is ſaid, *John* 1.14. *The Word was made Fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us, and we ſaw his Glory, the Glory as of the onely begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.* That Glory that we do for the preſent behold in Chriſt, and with which our hearts are taken, it is rather (for the moſt part) that fulneſs of Grace that is in Chriſt, for the good and benefit of Believers; with that we are uſually more taken then with his Eſſential Perſonal Perfections: But the whole of Jeſus Chriſts Glory ſhall yet ſhine forth ſo as it hath not done at any time; therefore *Pſal.* 102. 16. *When the Lord ſhall build up Sion, he ſhall appear in his Glory:* He is glorious now, but *he ſhall appear* in his Glory hereafter, beyond what he hath done at any time to this day: ſuitable unto which, is that Word, *Iſa.* 33. 17. *Thine Eyes ſhall ſee the King in his Beauty, they ſhall behold the Land that is very far off.* The beſt of Saints upon Earth, if they ſee ſomething in Chriſt that makes them in love with him, in the day of his Glory there ſhall be abundantly more diſcovered that ſhall make them in love with him, poſſibly more then ever they thought they ſhould be for ever. That is one part of that Glory ſhall come to this Branch of the Lord.

2. Chriſt ſhall in the end of this ſlaughter be made glorious in his Prieſtly Office; as

as he is a Saviour he shall be made more glorious then ever: It is the honour of Christ that he is a Saviour, *Act.*5.31. *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour:* But it hath been greatly to the disparagement of Christ, and his dishonour in this his Office that he hath been so lightly esteemed of among the Children of Men, that so few have taken hold of him for Life and Salvation: Those that have believed on Christ have been a small number, compared with the rest of the world, and of these few, they have been chiefly the poor, low and little ones of the World, persons of little esteem and account; therefore Christ saith, *Mat.*11.5. *The Poor have the Gospel preached unto them:* he saith it is preached to them, because it is received by them: the poor, inconsiderable ones of the World, have generally hitherto been the persons that have received Christ: It is true, some of the Great Ones of the World have courted Christ, and professed to own him, but not one of many have given up themselves unto Christ as a Saviour. But now this shall be the Glory upon the head of Christ, that Souls shall abundantly flock in unto him. Before Christ makes an end of his work in the World, he will so break the Hearts of Men, that they shall flow in unto him in great abundance: *Hag.*2.7. *And I*

will ſhake all Nations, and the Deſire of all Nations ſhall come; and I will fill this Houſe with Glory, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts: Chriſt by his Sword, Peſtilence and Famine, is ſhaking the Nations, that is his way; and when he hath done ſhaking the Nations, *the Deſire of all Nations ſhall come:* It is Chriſt is here intended, and he is called the *Deſire of all Nations*, becauſe the Nations of the World ſhall generally come unto him, and imbrace him, ſuch ſhall be the confluence and flowing in to Chriſt. This is intimated in that known place, *Iſa.* 60. 8. *Who are theſe that fly as a Cloud, and as the Doves unto their Windows?* It is ſpoken about the acceſs of Souls unto Chriſt; and mark, the Saints that ſhall be alive at that day, they cry with wonder and amazement, *Who are theſe that like Doves come to their Windows?* Doves you know fly in great flocks, where they are plentiful, and the meaning of this is, multitudes ſhall ſubject themſelves to Chriſt in truth, and give up themſelves to be ſaved by him; Chriſt now doth ſprinkle many Nations, according to that *Iſa.* 52. here and there a few Souls in divers parts and places of the world; but at length things ſhall be ſo ordered that even a Nation ſhall be born in a day, and abundance of poor Hearts ſhall give up themſelves unto the Lord Jeſus: This you have

have *Numb.* 24.7. *He shall pour the water out of his Buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his King shall be higher then Agag.* And this is another part of the Glory that is to come unto Jesus Christ.

3. Slaughter shall terminate in the Glory of Christ, in this respect; He shall be glorious in his Kingly Power, he shall be owned as the Head, and Lord, and Law-giver, the one onely Law-giver; so shall he be owned: *Isa.* 33.22. *For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, he will save us.* It relates unto a time when Christ shall be glorious: *The glorious Lord shall be as a place of Broad Rivers and Streams*; so you have it in the foregoing verse; and then there shall be a cry, *The Lord is our King, and he shall be our Law-giver.* For the present there is great debate between Christ and the Men of the World, who should give Laws, whose Prerogative it is to rule the Conscience; and men say unto Saints, *Bow down that we may go over:* they say unto the SOULS of Saints, *Bow down:* But when Christ shall be made glorious, these controversies shall soon end; then a Nation shall come and acknowledge it is Christ is to rule them in every thing. *Isa.* 2. decides the Controversie, where more then once it is said, *The Lord ALONE shall be exalted*;

and what then? verſ. 3. *Many People ſhall go and ſay, Come ye, and let us go up unto the Mountain of the Lord, to the Houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Sion ſhall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem: and he ſhall judge among the Nations, and ſhall rebuke many People.* This is the Spirit that ſhall be put upon many People, and they ſhall ſay, It is not this, and that, and the other, that pretends Dominion over the Conſcience, muſt teach us how to walk, but HE will teach us, and we will walk in his ways; and it is *out of Sion the Law ſhall go forth, and the Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem*; therefore *Numb.* 24. 7. it is ſaid, *Iſrael's King ſhall be higher then Agag*, and ſhall carry the day, and all the men of the Earth ſhall be conſtrained to ſubmit to him.

4. Chriſt ſhall be glorious in this reſpect, That all the Great Ones of the World ſhall come and fall at his Foot, and acknowledge they are in his hands, that Chriſt can and may diſpoſe of them as he pleaſeth. It is a buſineſs there is much tugging about in the World, the Great Ones of the World are loth Chriſt ſhould take his place, they would fain ſtand upon their own legs, and it is from hence all their contrariety and hatred againſt his People and Ways doth ariſe, intimated

mated in *Psal.*2.3. *The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their Bands asunder, and cast away their Cords from us.* They cannot think of stooping unto Christ, but it is in vain, for to this the greatest on Earth shall be brought; therefore Christ hath his Name, *Rev.* 19. 16. *He hath on his Vesture and on his Thigh, a Name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS:* It is written upon his Vesture and Garments, which is in the sight and full view of all Men: He shall be in the sight of the World owned as KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, and the greatest upon Earth shall be constrained to stoop unto him, as is excellently set forth in that typical Psalm, *Psal.*72. where Christs Dominion is much held out; *The Kings of Tarshish and of the Isles shall bring Presents, the Kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; yea all Kings shall fall down before him, all Nations shall serve him.*

5. Again, The Glory of Christ shall lie in the maintaining and excellent managing of his Power and Government; he shall maintain his Government and Glory: It is that that eclipses the glory of the Princes of this Earth, that they are not able to keep

their ſtations oft times; but Chriſt ſhall keep and maintain, and make good his ground: *Pſal.* 132.18. *His Enemies will I cloath with ſhame, but upon himſelf ſhall the Crown flouriſh:* Thoſe that would oppoſe him ſhall fall before him, but he ſhall maintain his own ſtation at a glorious rate. And likewiſe his Glory ſhall be in the management of his Government, he will put an end to Oppreſſion, and judge with Equity; he will manage his Government ſo as that none ſhall find fault with him: It is the miſery of the Potentates of this World, that their ill management of their Power, loſeth them their Glory; but Chriſt, and all that ſhall have any power under him, ſhall not do ſo; *Iſa.* 32.1. *A King ſhall reign in Righteouſneſs, and Princes ſhall rule in Judgement:* all matters ſhall then be managed with much equity and uprightneſs. *Iſa.* 11. 1, *&c.* is a notable Scripture for this, *There ſhall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jeſſe,* (that is, Chriſt) *the Spirit of the Lord and of Wiſdom ſhall be upon him:* there is his Glory, when he comes to govern he ſhall do things with wiſdom, that is Wiſdom really, for the Wiſdom of this World comes to nothing, and the ends of the Men of the World are not accompliſhed; but Chriſt ſhall rule with Wiſdom; and alſo with Equity, verſ. 4. *With Righteouſneſs ſhall he*

he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity for the Meek of the Earth. Now Christs thus managing of his Government, will render him very glorious: Which leads me to the fourth thing propounded.

Fourthly, That Christ in his being glorious, shall be glorious for the good of his *People*; those of *Israel* that shall be carried thorow the distresses and straights they shall meet withal in the World, they shall share in, and partake of all the Glory of Christ with much comfort: *Psal.*72.7. it is there said, *In his days shall the Righteous flourish:* when it is well with him, it shall not be ill with them: So *Isa.*24. where it is said, ver. 23. Christ shall *reign in Mount Zion, and before his Antients gloriously*; and you shall see, vers. 16. how it will be with his People, *From the uttermost parts of the Earth have I heard Songs, even Glory to the Righteous:* When Christ shall be glorified, his People shall be glorified with him. If the Saints say unto Christ, as *Joseph* did unto *Pharaoh's* Butler, *Remember me when it is well with thee*; their Desires shall be answered at a better rate then *Joseph's* were. When Christ shall be made glorious in the World, as he shall be one day, he will not be one day without his Peoples reaping the good and benefit thereof:

of: and it must needs be thus; for consider First the Union between Christ and his People; Christ is the Head and Husband of his Saints. And Civilians say, *Uxor lucet Maritî radiis*, the Wife partakes of the honour of her Husband; so it shall be here, the Saints shall partake of and reap the good of that honour that shall be upon the Head of Christ; Christ is so full of love to his People, that the very love he bears them, were there no other tie, would engage him to interest them in the good of his Glory; Christ is the Head and his People are the Members, and if the Head be dignified, all the Members must also; it cannot be otherwise. Secondly, Christs Glory must needs be for the good of his People, in that all the Glory he is intrusted with, as Mediator, it is in their names, for their sakes, and for their uses; he is *Head over all things to his Church*, Eph. 1.22. I may therefore say unto Saints, as they in *Cant.* 3.11. *Go forth, O ye Daughters of Jerusalem, and behold King Solomon with the Crown wherewith his Mother crowned him in the day of his Espousals, in the day of the gladness of his Heart:* Go forth and look upon, by the Eye of Faith, that Glory that shall be upon the Head of Christ, and look upon it with comfort; you may account it a joyous spectacle, for it is that that shall work out your

your Mercy, if your hearts be upright with God. A little further to shew you what benefit shall come unto Saints by Christs being glorious.

1. When Christ is glorious, glorious Liberty shall come unto the Saints: We are now a company of inthralled Creatures, not only unto our own lusts, but the lusts of men; you have a notable expression, *Rom.* 8. 21. *The Creature it self also shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God:* The Creatures of the Earth are now in bondage unto the lusts of Men: our Rayment is in bondage to our Pride, our Meat to Gluttony, our Drink to Drunkenness; and other things the like: the Creatures are held in slavery unto the lusts of Men; but there is a time when they shall have glorious Liberty, when men shall not be able at their pleasure to inthrall and oppress them. *Psal.* 72. 12, 14. the Psalmist speaking of Christ in his glory, saith of him, That *he shall deliver the Needy when he crieth, the Poor also, and him that hath no helper; he shall redeem their Souls from death and violence, and precious shall their Blood be in his sight.* It is worth your observing, that the whole design of Christ is but to do his People good, to save them; and therefore at the 4th verse of that Psalm it is said, *He shall save the Children of the needy;*

needy; and particularly this service he shall do them, he shall give them glorious Liberty.

2. This shall be their Glory, their Reproach shall be wiped away; the People of God have been a reproached People greatly reproached, but their reproach shall be rolled away. When *Israel* came to *Canaan* they were circumcised, and the place where they were circumcised was called *Gilgal*, and the reason given, *Josh.* 5. 9. *For there he rolled away the reproach of Egypt*; the lot of the Saints is to be reproached in *Egypt*, but there shall be a time and day, and a Place also, which he will name *Gilgal*, a time and place when and where he will roll away the reproach of his People. For the present sometimes God gives his People unto reproach, as you have it, *Isa.* 43. 28. *Therefore I have profaned the Princes of the Sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches:* but there is also a time when reproaches shall be taken away, *Then will the Lord be jealous for his Land, and pity his People, yea the Lord will answer and say unto his People, Behold, I will send you Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and ye shall be satisfied therewith, and I will no more make you a reproach among the Heathen.*

3. The Glory of the Saints shall be this, They shall be raised up to much height and dig-

dignity, that the greatest of all the ungodly ones of the Earth shall bow before them; for which take one place instead of many, *Isa.* 60.14. *The Sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee, shall bow themselves down at the soals of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel:* It were great arrogancy for any of the Saints to hope for such a thing as this, had not God spoken it; and it is as great infidelity not to believe it, since the mouth of the Lord hath uttered it.

4. They shall have this Glory, More eminent and uninterupted Communion with God and Christ, then ever yet they had; and this is the thing that every good Soul longs for: long for it they do, that is certain; and when they are hinder'd in that enjoyment, it is their great burthen; when their Tabernacles are taken down, their Communion's broken, this is that that makes them go mourning: but the Lord will give his People more eminent and glorious communion with himself and his Son, then they have yet partaken of. It is said, *Isa.* 60.7. with respect to a time yet to come, *The Flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the Rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine Altar, and I will*

will glorifie the Houſe of my Glory. Obſerve it, the Glory of the Temple of old was the preſence of God in the Temple, he was ſaid to *fill the Houſe with his Glory*; the communion that the Saints had with God, was the Temple-Glory, God meeting with them in his Appointments and Adminiſtrations; and now he promiſeth here, *I will glorifie the Houſe of my Glory*; I will fill my Churches and Saints with more Glory then yet they have ſeen; the meaning is, they ſhall have more of my preſence with them, and more abundant communion and fellowſhip with me, then heretofore: *Iſa.66.11.* it is ſaid, *They ſhall be delighted with the abundance of her Glory, that ye may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the Breſts of her Conſolation, that ye may milk out and be delighted with the abundance of her Glory.*

5. And in the laſt place, this ſhall be the Glory of Saints, Even their glorious Union one with another, and this ſhall be their mercy in the day of Chriſt; in *Zeph.3.* 8,9. the Lord ſaith, *Therefore wait ye upon me, until the day that I riſe up unto the prey, for my determination is to gather the Nations, that I may aſſemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger, for all the Earth ſhall be devoured with the fire of my jealouſie; for then will I turn to the Peo-*

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ple a pure language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent. It is the great cry among the People of God, O that we could come to Unity, to love as Brethren! all cry for want of it, though few endeavour after it as they ought to do: but when we have done our utmost endeavours, (which is our Duty) yet it will not rise up to any great height, till Christ come in his Glory: *Wait upon ME until I arise to the prey*, to do gloriously in the *World*, and then I will work thus and thus, that you may come to serve me with One Consent. They mistake greatly that think to force People to a Union, to make them all of one mind; it is the work of God to pour out a Spirit of Union, which he hath promised to do; *The Lord shall be one, and his Name one, in all the Earth*, Zach. 4. and *Jer.* 32. 39. *I will give them one Heart, and one Way, to serve me.* When Christ shall be advanced, our Divisions shall be broken; and whatever the Devil and wicked Men have cast in as a snare and means to rend and divide, shall be taken out of the way: It is then that we shall be enlightened in the things wherein we vary one from another: What is the ground of all our differences? they are partly ignorance, and partly pride; our ignorance, we cannot see into Truth, one thinks one

one thing, and another another, and becauſe we cannot ſee into every thing, we diſagree; which is furthered by our Pride, cleaving unto our own imaginations: but this will be removed, God will lay low the pride of men, and we ſhall have more light, we ſhall ſee that we never ſaw, and be enlightened as we never were: *Iſa.*60.20. *Thy Sun ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall thy Moon withdraw it ſelf; for the Lord ſhall be thine everlaſting Light, and the days of thy mourning ſhall be ended:* The Lord ſhall at that day let us into the knowledge of much of his mind, which yet we grope in the dark without light in; and then there ſhall be a great Union among Saints. Now to all theſe ends, to the Glory of Chriſt, and good of his People, Chriſt is working by his ſlaughtering-Providences: Thoſe things that we wonder at, and know not what they tend to, it is to that end they ſubſerve, and ſhall be crowned with that iſſue. And thus I have diſpatched what I intend for the Doctrinal part.

I

I shall now proceed to the Application

USE I.

IF this then be a Truth, That the end of Slaughters shall be to make Christ glorious, and his Glory shall be greatly for the advantage of the *Israel* of God that escape in times of slaughter; It will then certainly be found a Truth very useful many ways: and that which first is upon my heart to give forth to you, is that which I hope will be also upon your hearts; to put the question to your Souls, Whether you are really the *Israel* of God or no. Escaped we are hitherto (through Grace) we stand alive in the presence of God, but what state is it in which we stand? Can you say, Through Grace you have good hopes the Lord hath not onely spared you, but also implanted you into the number of his own People, and made you of the number of his own *Israel*? The Mercy and the Good of an Escape, is limited in the Text unto the *Israel* of God; others may escape as well as they, but in the conclusion it will be little to their comforts. *Israel* had his name given to him from his

w restling with God in Prayer, and prevailing; and the Name is applied,

1. To the natural Seed of *Jacob*; the People of the *Jews* are often times in Scripture called *Israel* promiscuously, one with another.

2. It is applied unto the spiritual Ones among the natural Seed of *Jacob*, those of the Jewish People that were really brought into a subjection unto, and an acquaintance with the Lord, they are by way of distinction from the rest of the Seed of *Jacob*, called *Israel*.

3. It is applied unto all, both Jews and Gentiles, that are really brought within the Bond of the Covenant, Scripture dignifies them often with the title of *Israel*. This is therefore the question that you and I are to put seriously to our Souls, What testimony and witness have we, that we are brought within the Bond of the Covenant, and that our preservation is this day a Covenant-mercy to our Souls? That is the question that must be asked.

Unbelief hath certainly proved the destruction of very many, I mean the eternal destruction; and Presumption hath been the slaughter of not a few; and, if I judge not amiss, Presumption is oftentimes the root upon which Unbelief grows: Many sitting under

under the Gospel of Christ, and having some Form and Profession for God upon them, do run away hastily, concluding they are really of Gods Israel; God Almighty give to you and me a greater Spirit of Wisdom, that we may not upon slight grounds draw conclusions that we are within the Covenant, but may build our hope upon some good Foundation. My Friends, it stands you greatly in hand to be faithful and serious in this enquiry into your Spirits in this matter; for if you should not be of the Israel of God, it would not onely rob you of much mercy you might enjoy in this life, it would not onely strip you of a part in the good that shall come to the Israel of God when the Branch of the Lord shall be glorious, but what is more and what is worse, it will cut you short of the glory that shall be put upon the head of the Saints in Eternity, when Christ shall have given up the Kingdom to his Father, and God shall be all in all. Brethren, upon many serious thoughts I may tell you, that there is great ground why every Soul should be jealous over his own heart, and should not hastily determine concerning its state: Great are the mistakes, false grounds, and bottoms of hope upon which many poor creatures build; and it concerns you to act curiously and warily, lest you should be also mistaken.

To quicken you a little, and to poſſeſs your Souls that there is need, and great need, for poor hearts to have a jealouſie over themſelves in this matter; I would take leave to commend and open to you two Scriptures that I find in the Book of Truth: one is in *Rom.*9.6,7. *Not as though the Word of God hath taken no effect; for they are not all Iſrael which are of Iſrael, neither becauſe they are the ſeed of Abraham are they all Children*: Look to the fourth verſ. and you will finde that there are great Priviledges reckoned up that did appertain to *Iſrael*; *Who are Iſrael, to whom pertaineth the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenant, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promiſes.* How, might ſome of the Jews ſay, do theſe things belong unto *Iſrael?* why ſurely *Iſrael* are cut ſhort of them; for there is not one of many of them that have received Chriſt, and ſo are cut ſhort of theſe Priviledges of the Goſpel. To that the Apoſtle anſwereth, verſ.6,7. *Not as though the Word of God hath taken no effect; for they are not all Iſrael which are of Iſrael*, &c. as if he ſhould ſay, You muſt not judge that theſe great things are entailed upon the Jewiſh People becauſe they are Jews, or the ſeed of *Abraham*, but it is through Faith they come to an Intereſt in theſe great things. And in theſe words the

the Apostle doth remove a double bad Foundation upon which many poor Creatures are apt to build a hope.

1. *They are not Israel because of Israel:* that is, a Soul is not an Israelite indeed because he crowds himself in among that number, because he takes up the same Profession with them, and pretends to be in the same Spirit with them. Let it be minded, what is the Foundation of your Hope, think you? you are not therefore *Israel*, because of *Israel*, because of them that do profess for God, that will not be a foundation that is fit for you to build upon. And then,

2. *Neither are they Israel because they are the Seed of Abraham:* This was a mighty thing which the Jewish People boasted of; say they, We are *Abraham*'s natural Seed, his Seed according to the flesh: And possibly some also may reckon upon some such thing at this day; we are the Children of them that do believe, and our education hath been somewhat suitable thereto; but not therefore Israel, because of *Abraham*'s Seed, that is a mistake you should be watchful against. From the consideration of this word, it is evident People may reckon themselves *Israel* upon unsafe grounds, and therefore we ought to be serious in our enquiry into this matter.

The other Scripture is in *Isa.* 48. where

you have the preceding things, and somewhat more expressed, vers. 1, 2. *Hear ye this, O House of Jacob, which are called by the Name of Israel, and are come forth out of the Waters of Judah, which swear by the Name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness; for they call themselves of the Holy City, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel, the Lord of Hosts is his name.* It is a Scripture worth your considering; and it doth in the general teach us thus much; That a People may be many things, and may do many things that do seemingly bespeak them to be of the *Israel* of God, but when the matter is more thorowly enquired into, it will be found it is no such thing. Take a few particulars out of the Text, and observe what persons may be and do, and yet really not be the *Israel* of God.

1. They may be called by the name of *Israel*, they may be reputed Saints, pass for somewhat in the esteem and account of others; suitable to which is that Scripture which you have, *Rev.* 3. 1. where the Spirit of God testifies concerning the Church of *Sardis*, that *they had a name to live, but yet were dead:* In the opinion of those that did converse with them, and that held communion with them, they were indeed alive; but

but when the Spirit of God came to paſs a ſentence on them, and to determine really what their ſtate was, ſays the holy Ghoſt, *Thou art dead.*

2. Obſerve alſo that they were the Poſterity of *Jacob*; *Hear ye, O Houſe of Jacob, that are come forth out of the Waters of Judah:* that is, you are ſome of the multitude of *Judah*'s Off-ſpring; they were the ſeed of them that were in Covenant, but yet notwithſtanding many of them were Strangers to the Lord, and not of *Iſrael* unto this day. I beſeech you mind it, that Grace is not certainly and infallibly intailed upon every one of the Seed of Believers; although it is very frequently ſeen that ſome or other of their Seed the Lord is pleaſed to chuſe to himſelf, and does ſet them apart to be the Inſtruments of his praiſe, according to *Iſa.* 61. 9. *And their Seed ſhall be known among the Gentiles, and their Off-ſpring among the People; all that ſee them ſhall acknowledge them, that they are the Seed which the Lord hath bleſſed:* not onely the Seed of them which the Lord hath bleſſed, but a Seed which are themſelves bleſſed in their own perſons: It is the uſual method of the Lord, though he may paſs by ſome, yet he does take ſome other of the Seed, to bring them near to himſelf. But this I muſt let you know, you muſt no fur-

ther make reckoning of the interest of Parents in the Covenant, but as a ground of Hope to you, and an argument to plead with God; you must not thence conclude, that you your selves are in the Bond of the Covenant, till some work be upon your hearts.

3. They made a profession for God, and therefore are said to *swear by the Name of the Lord.* Swearing by the Name of the Lord is an act of Worship, a professed owning of God, which shall be done by Saints, when they are found in the best Spirit, witness that word, *Isa.65.16. He that blesseth himself in the Earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the Earth shall swear by the God of Truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and are hid from thine eyes.* It is spoken about times in which a great deal of mercy and good will be brought forth, and then there shall be swearing by the Name of the Lord; it is a professed owning of God: and thus did this People do, and yet there was nothing of God in them, nothing of Truth, nothing but hypocrisie and deceit bound up in their Spirits.

4. Observe also they did reckon themselves of *Israel*, they were right in their own opinion and esteem; they called themselve the *Holy City:* It is a marvelous easie thing for a Soul to get a good opinion of himself,

to

to ſtand right in his own apprehenſions; but I would not have you build too much upon this. It is an excellent caution which the Apoſtle gives, *Rom.* 12. 3. *For I ſay, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himſelf more highly then he ought to think, but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the meaſure of Faith:* I ſay unto every man among YOU, (he ſpeaks unto Profeſſors) be not too haſty and forward to conclude well concerning your ſelves, but let every man judge himſelf to be no more, then according to the meaſure of Grace he hath received. My Friends, be your Profeſſion what it will, and your approbation among others what it can, you are really no more, nor will you ſtand for more in the day of Chriſt, then according as there ſhall be ſomewhat of God found upon your Souls.

5. Obſerve alſo they had much confidence that God would own them, and therefore it is ſaid, *They ſtay'd themſelves upon the God of Iſrael*; they profeſs that they do act Faith on God, and are full of confidence that they ſhall be owned of God, and not rejected by him. But after all this, ſee what a character the Spirit of God gives of this People, v. 4. *Becauſe I knew that thou art obſtinate, and thy Neck is an Iron ſinew, and thy Brow Braſs:* a Peo-

People very wretched and wicked, very rebellious against God, not in the least subjecting themselves to God, and to his mind, after all the profession they have made, and their pretence to be *Israel*. Seriously consider these things, and tell me if there be not cause that each Soul of us should fear, lest we be found short of that number.

But you will say, How may I gather some comfortable grounded conclusions that I am one of the *Israel* of God? I am an Escaped One this day, and would not be willing that I should be stript of the blessing of this Blessing, I would have the Mercy in mercy; and therefore how may I come to some comfortable hope, that I really am a *Jew inwardly, and partake of the circumcision that is of the Heart, whose praise is not of man, but of God?*

I answer in a few things, the Lord make them really effectual upon your Souls.

1. If thou art one of *Israel*, thou art one of another Spirit then the men of this world; the *Israel* of God they are a distinct People, separate from the rest of the Earth, and separated in their Spirits eminently, in another Spirit then the men of this world be. What is said concerning *Caleb*, *Numb.* 14. 24. is truly applicable to every one of *Israel* in some measure; *But my Servant Caleb, because he had ANOTHER SPIRIT with him, and*

and hath followed me fully, &c. There were abundance of Israelites in the Camp at that day, but few of them were in the frames they should be in; *Caleb was of another Spirit*, and such is every Saint: The Searcher of all hearts knows that there is a difference between him and the world: Not a Saint in the world, but hath some ground to make an appeal to God, as sometimes the Psalmist doth, *Search me and try me, and know my thoughts*; and to appeal to the Lord, as sometimes *Jeremiah* did, *Thou knowest my heart towards thee, O Lord.* *Isaac* had been begging Seed for his *Rebecca*, because she had been long barren; at length it is said, *There was strugling in her Womb*; she wondered what it should mean; but see what answer the Spirit of God makes her, *Gen.*25.22,23. *And the Lord said, Two Nations are in thy Womb, and two manner of People shall be separated from thy Bowels; and the one People shall be stronger then the other People, and the Elder shall serve the Younger*: The two manner of People, were *Jacob* and *Esau*; and I bring this, to tell you, that *Jacob*, who was after named *Israel*, and so all in the same Spirit with him, they are another manner of People, as it were another Nation, another thing then the men of this world are; there is an eminent difference and distinction between

tween *Esau* and *Israel*, they are of different Spirits, and of a different language, as several Nations differing one from another. 1 *Cor.*2.12. The Apostle tells us, *We have not received the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God:* This he speaks concerning the Saints of God, they have received not the Spirit of the World, but another Spirit distinct and different from them. Brethren, I would put it to your Consciences, and would ask you what the answer of your Souls is? What ground have you to conclude that there is another Spirit in you then that which is in the World? It may be your practices are somewhat other then the practices of the World are; but grant it be so, yet if you are not in another Spirit also, if the inward frame and constitution of your Souls do not differ, you will not be found among the *Israel* of God in the conclusion. Ah my Friends! possibly some of your Practices may not vary from the men of the World, possibly you can be vain with them that are vain, and prophane with them that are prophane; if it be thus with you, you must reckon your selves to be of the brood of *Esau* to this day. Observe the words of the Apostle, *Rom.*12.2. *And be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.* What say you? Are you conformed

formed to this World? Do you drive the trade, and take the course that the men of this World do? Are you vain, and frothy, and foolish, giving up your selves to serve divers lusts? Youth is subject to be so, and if it be thus with you, you are not of *Israel* to this day: But if you say, We are not of this World, we do not act as they do, we do not live as they do; then let me ask you, Are you transformed? It is well not to be conformed to this World, but that is not enough, you must be transformed, and your Spirits renewed; you must be of another Spirit then the men of this World. I would beseech you to look well to your hearts, and commune with your Souls, and do it not slightly: I know many (and would wail over them) that notwithstanding their profession for God, and their talking much of him, and being high in an external owning of *God*, yet in their walking (and therefore sure much more in their spirits) they vary little from the men of this World: If it be thus with you, though you are escaped this day, yet you cannot comfortably conclude you are of the *Israel* of God, or that you shall bear a part in that mercy and good they shall enjoy, when the Branch of the Lord shall be glorious.

2. Are you *Israel* indeed? then there is some-

ſomewhat of Heart-cleanneſs in you; there is ſomewhat of cleanneſs of Heart, and purity of Soul in you. Thus the Pſalmiſt deſcribes the *Iſrael* of God, *Pſal.*73.1. *Truly God is good to Iſrael, even to them that are of a clean Heart: God is good to Iſrael,* he loves them, they are exceeding dear to him, and becauſe they are dear to him, therefore it is he is good to them: But who are the *Iſrael?* They are a certain ſort of People that do not onely put on an external garb of Holineſs, a pretence for God, and his work, and ſervice, and glory; but a People that have ſome inward conformity and likeneſs to *God*; who have ſome cleanneſs of heart, as well as of hands and face. Man by nature is a very impure creature, polluted grievouſly, defiled all over, all the Soul, all the Powers and Faculties of it are ſtained and grievouſly polluted, and therefore Sinners are in Scripture called the *Impure*; and Saints, by way of diſtinction from them, are called *Pure.* A ſad account it is that the Apoſtle gives of Sinners, *Tit.*1.15. *To the pure all things are pure, but to the undefiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, and their very conſciences are defiled.* Jeſus Chriſt deſcribing the perſons that ſhall ſee God to their comfort and joy, he calls them *the pure in heart*, Mat.5.8. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* Many

ny there are that would pretend to this purity, but it is peculiar and proper to the *Israel* of God onely, it is the issue and fruit of a new work upon the heart; it is the blessed effect of the Grace of God in and through the Covenant of Grace, the making good of the Promise which he hath passed, *Ezek.* 36. 25,26. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthinesse, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you; a new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a Heart of flesh.*

There are them who are really impure, and grievously polluted, and yet think all is well with them, witness that known word, *Prov.* 14. 12,13. *There is a Generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthinesse: There is a Generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up.* There are some Souls greatly confident of their own purity, and yet defiled wofully: While they boast of their freedom, and brag of their purity, and are crying to others it may be, *Stand by thy self, for I am holier then thou*; they become after this Servants to Corruption.

Others there are in whom a cleansing-work is really begun, but because there are some

some remains of corruption in their Souls, it fills their hearts so much with grief, and blinds their eyes so much, that they cannot see the cleansing that is begun. To clear this therefore I must tell you, That where there is really heart-purity, there is much of the love of purity: If thou hast not attained what of it thou wouldest, yet thy heart is really in love with it: *Prov.*22.11. *He that loveth pureness of Heart, for the grace of his Lips the King shall be his Friend.* There are a People it may be have not attained to that pureness of heart they would do, but yet pureness of heart they love, and Grace is poured into their Lips; to such the King will be a Friend, they shall find a Friend of Christ, and he will not be ashamed to own them in the day of his greatest Glory, when the Crown shall be set upon his Head. Not a Soul in whom purity is, but he is pressing after it in greater measure; though he has not attained it, yet he does not sit down and cry, There is no hope for me; but he is going forward, and pressing after more of the Image of God to be implanted in his Soul. Now what is the answer of your Hearts? Can you from hence conclude comfortably, you are some of *Gods Israel?* Are the lusts that boil up in your hearts, fomented and cherished, favoured and allowed, served and pleased?

If

If ſo, it is ſad with you: If you lie in the boſom of any Luſt, as in the lap of a *Delilah*: if thou ſayeſt of any ſin in thy Soul, as ſometimes *Lot* ſaid concerning his *Zoar*, *I cannot eſcape to the Mountains, but there is a City near, is it not a little one? let me flee thither, and I ſhall live:* All the Cities of the Plain were doomed to deſtruction at that day, but *Lot* was earneſt to prevail for the ſaving of one little City, that he might delight himſelf in it. There is not a luſt in thy Soul but it is doomed to deſtruction, and God requires it ſhould be put to death; but poſſibly thou ſayeſt of it, O ſpare it, it is a little one. Let me be faithful to thee, and tell thee, that that ſin will be enough to race out thy name out of the Catalogue of the *Iſrael* of God; and when others will ſtand with comfort, that have eſcaped this day, thou wilt be aſhamed and confounded.

3. Art thou of the *Iſrael* of God? Then thou art one that haſt learned in ſome meaſure to live upon God. As it is the certain property of, ſo it is a great excellency in the *Iſrael* of God, that they live upon him; and this was as eminently found in *Jacob*, as ever in any one of the Servants of the Lord: When he was going to *Padan Aram*, not knowing what ſhould befall him; obſerve how he ſpeaks, *Gen.* 28. 20. *Jacob vowed a Vow,*

saying, If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, and will give Bread to eat, and Rayment to put on, &c. The great thing about which he was solicitous, was, that he might have the presence of God. He had a little before in this Chapter a most glorious Vision of God; (and I must confess Visions of God are exceeding effectual to teach and work up the heart to a living upon *God*) and what does *Jacob* now say? If he might have but God to live upon, a very little of other matters should content him; *Bread to eat*, somewhat that might support his nature, and *Rayment to put on*, enough to cover him, and keep him warm; he doth not say, If I may have Varieties and Dainties to eat, and may be decked in costly Apparel; no, but onely *Bread to eat, and Rayment to put on:* If I can have but God, a little of the World will serve my turn. This is the Spirit of *Israel*, and that with which I doubt very few are acquainted. I must crave leave to put this to all your Souls, and ask you what is the answer of your hearts? Can you say upon good grounds, as the Church of God sometimes said, *The Lord is my Portion, saith my Soul? Lam.* 3.24. Suppose, should Satan take you, as once he did Christ, and set you upon a *high Mountain, and shew you the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them,* and

tell

ell you, All these things you shall have, if you will forgo and part with God? What would the nswer of your hearts be in that case? Suppose Christ should come and say to you, *If ou will have a part in me, you must expect trouble; you shall be hated of all men for my Name's ake; yea, the Parents from whose Bowels ye prang, shall turn against you:* Can you say, *Amen, so be it; Let me have the Lord for my Portion, and I can forgo all other things whatsoever?* This is *Israel's* Spirit, and so far as it s thus with you, it is right. What excelency have you seen in the Lord at any time? How have your hearts been taken with him? What are the workings of your Souls toward him? What are you labouring after? Is it that you may know God and enjoy him? What is it doth relieve you in the time of your straights? Is it this, that the Lord is yours? It was *David's* comfort when all went against him, when *Ziklag* was burnt, his Wives and all were taken, and the People spake of stoning him, he then encouraged himself in the Lord his God. What is it that sweetens all your enjoyments to you? Is it this, That you have a part in that which is better then all these, that you have a part in the Lord, and he is become your God and Father in Christ? Happy, yea, thrice happy are you that can say as once *David* did, *The*

Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; and this is my Salvation, and this is all my Joy. But O unhappy they, who are not able to subsist without their Thousands, and look upon themselves as undone for ever, if worldly Interest runs but a little against them: And unhappy you, if in your Youth and Strength you have few thoughts, or few serious thoughts of God; if he be little in your thoughts and hearts, I tell you it is to be feared you are not of the *Israel* of God unto this day: Though you escape and are preserved, yet it is to be feared your preservation will not be attended with mercy to you, nor shall you bear a part in that Glory that shall be upon the heads of *Israel*, when the Branch of the Lord shall be glorious.

4. If you are the *Israel* of God, then are you Holiness to the Lord; you not onely live upon him, but to him, in some measure. *Jer.*2.9. the Prophet saith, *Israel was Holiness to the Lord*; that is, when *Israel* was in his right spirit, then he was Holiness to the Lord. For the expression, you have it in Scripture elsewhere, *Zech.*14.20,21. *In that day there shall be upon the Bells of the Horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, and the Pots in the Lords House shall be like the Bowls before the Altar; yea, every Pot in Jerusalem*

and

and in Judah shall be Holiness unto the Lord of Hosts: that is, every Person and every Thing shall be for God, for his Work and Service, to be to his Praise and Glory. Certain it is, Saints are not their own, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price*; and so *Tit.* 2. 13, 14. where speaking concerning the purchase of Christ, *Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might purifie to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works*. The Vessels of the Temple, before they were made use of in the Temple, they had a legal consecrating, and being cleansed, they were given up to the work of the Temple, to be for that use for ever: And so the Saints of the Lord, who were typified by the Vessels of the Temple, they are first purified, cleansed, and sanctified by Christ, by the work of the Spirit on their Souls; and then given up to the Lord and his service. It may be said of them as *Hannah* said of her Son *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 28. *Therefore I have lent him unto the Lord, to be his so long as he lives*. Every Israelite indeed is one lent to the Lord, given up to be for the work and service of the Lord in his whole course, and in every thing to exalt his praise, to mind his

glory. Certainly thus it ought to be, and this was one end of the Death of Christ, that he might have his People be for him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 15. *He died and rose, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that died for them and rose again*; and unto this Spirit Saints are wrought up in some good measure, as is expressed, *Rom.* 14. 7. *And none of us*, saith the Apostle, *live to our selves.* Souls, what say your Hearts to this matter? You profess for the Lord, but are you for him as consecrated things in the House of God? Which way do your Hearts work day by day? This know, where there hath not been a solemn resignation and giving up a mans self unto the Lord, where there is not a diligent observing of a mans whole course, to see to what ends they are directed, and whether the glory of Christ be therein sought, it is doubtful that Soul is not of the Israel of God to this day. The truth is, the sins of many witness to their Faces, and I make no doubt but that inscription may be written over the doors of many Professors, upon too great ground, *All men seek their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ*: If this be the spirit of any to whom these things may come, you may fear (though you are spared, and are not cut down this day) you stand but to cumber the ground, such as God takes little delight

in,

in, and such as from whom he hath little fruit, such as he doth not reckon among the number of his Israel, and such as shall not be blessed with Israels mercies, when the Branch of the Lord shall be exalted.

5. Are you *Israel?* then are you a praying People; *Israel* had thence his Name, from his wrestling and prevailing with God; God asked him what was his Name, *Gen.* 32.27,28. he said, *Jacob*; *and God said, Thy Name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a Prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.* In his praying there is observable his importunity, and that is expressed partly when it is said he *wrestled*; and also in that expression wherein much freedom and familiarity with God is set forth; God said, *Let me go*; says *Jacob*, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*, v. 26. which importunity of his is again noted by the Spirit of God, *Hos.* 12.4. *He had power over the Angel, he wept and he made supplication.* There is also observable, that this Prayer it was in secret, *Gen.* 32.24. *And Jacob was left ALONE*; it was between the Lord and himself in secret: which I would beseech you to consider heartily, That as soon, yea, at the very first moment when a Soul is enrolled among the number of *Israel*, at that instant he becomes a praying Per-

ſon, as in the caſe of *Saul*, who was afterward called *Paul*. And let me ask you that attend on the Lord in publick Duties, what are you in ſecret? Does God uſually there hear from you? Cannot you live without ſeeing the face of God in ſecret? Let me tell you, publick Duties have many temptations; a man may deſire to be engaged in them from many baſe and bad ends; yea, it is poſſible natural Conſcience and your Education may carry you into corners ſometimes: but therefore in ſecret how do you carry it? Doth it ſatisfie you that you have been in your Cloſets, and have ſpent it may be a quarter of an hour there, and it may be with a ſlight and formal Spirit? This is not the Spirit of *Iſrael*: But if thou art an *Iſraelite* indeed, when thou art in ſecret thou wilt be fervent and earneſt with God. In publick Duties, a man may ſeem to be zealous, that he may get a Name, or keep up a Name that he hath gotten, or to ſome ſuch-like end; but when in ſecret the Soul cries mightily to the Lord, it is a good ſign that there is a ſenſe of want, and that it does ariſe from a Spirit of Grace in the Soul, when thou canſt in ſecret ſigh and mourn before the Lord.

Now theſe things I have gone over with this deſign, to ſee if I could let you into a lit-

little Hope and good Ground, that as you have escaped, so you are escaping Israelites, who shall partake of Glory when Christ, the Branch of the Lord, shall be made glorious: And the Lord help you to be faithful to your Souls, and make you *Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile.*

USE II.

THis will lead me to a Second Use: If it be thus, that the Glory that shall come to Christ shall be for the good of escaping-*Israel*: Then methinks you should say, Pray what will come to them that are not *Israel*, though they do escape?

Ah wo to them! Dread and Terrour will be their portion. I tell you Souls, if any of you that are Escaping Ones this day, are not of the *Israel* of God, there is dread enough behind to make your hearts tremble, though you have out-lived the present calamity. I confess I cannot well tell you what the dread of your Condition is; for the Spirit of God says, *Job* 31.3. *Is not destruction to the Wicked, and a strange punishment to the Workers of iniquity?* The Spirit of God seems to say there should fall upon the heads of the Ungodly things that shall be strange in their very nature, things unthought of. Let me

tell

tell you, though you are among the number of profeſſing Ones, and among them that are *Iſrael*, yet if thou art not an *Iſraelite* indeed, the hand of God will find thee out. *Jer.*50. when *Babylons* plagues are threatned, it is ſaid, verſ.35. *A Sword is upon the Caldeans, ſaith the Lord*; and then it is added, verſ.37. *A Sword is upon their Horſes and Chariots, and upon all the mingled People that are in the midſt of her.* It is ſaid upon the Children of *Iſrael*'s going out of *Egypt*, that there went with them a *mixt multitude*, there crowded among them ſome that were not the *Iſrael* of God: Indeed I ſuppoſe it is ſuch a kind of People the Spirit of God here ſpeaks of. Poſſibly thou art mixed among Profeſſors, but thy heart is not right with God; God will find thee out, and his hand will deal with thee. What was falſly ſurmiſed of *Paul*, when he had eſcaped the Shipwrack, and was come among the Barbarians, it is ſaid, *A Viper came and faſtened upon his hand*; and ſay they, *No doubt this man is a Murderer, whom, though he hath eſcaped the Sea, yet Vengeance ſuffereth not to live*: What the Barbarians falſly ſurmiſed, may be true concerning any of you; though you have eſcaped the ſlaughter of this day, the hand of God may find you out notwithſtanding.

A few things, and but a few things, to ſhew you what the miſery of thoſe is like to be, who are not the *Iſrael* of God indeed, though eſcaped for the preſent.

1. Chriſt in the day of his Glory will cut them down, tread them down without number: The expreſſions of Scripture in this caſe muſt not be judged of according unto ſome of the Laws in our Land, which they ſay are made (*in terrorem*) onely to affright men, and it is not intended that the ſeverity of them ſhall be inflicted on them; but whatſoever God hath ſaid concerning Sinners, ſhall be certainly executed: *Iſa.*63. 3. *I will tread down the People in my anger, and trample them in my fury*; and the ſame you have again, verſ.6. This is like to be the portion of thoſe that are eſcaped, and are not the Iſrael of God. The Book of *Joel* is a Prophecy relating to that time when Chriſt ſhall be glorious, verſ.14. *Multitudes in the Valley of Deciſion, for the Day of the Lord is near in the Valley of Deciſion:* The day of the Lords Glory, it will be a ſlaughtering-day, and multitudes ſhall fall; and they are ſaid to fall in the Valley of Deciſion, becauſe at that time the Controverſie ſhall be decided that hath depended ſo long, Who are the Lords People, and who are for him, and who are owned of him indeed and in truth. You read

read of Christ, *Rev.* 14. 14. *And I looked, and behold a white Cloud, and upon the Cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden Crown, and in his hand a sharp Sickle:* Christ when he shall come to wear his golden Crown, he comes with a Sickle in his hand: Christ is reaping by every Judgement and Slaughter he makes, and possibly you may out-live some Slaughters; but look on further, vers. 17, 18, &c. *And another Angel came out of the Temple which is in Heaven, he also having a sharp Sickle; and another Angel came out from the Altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry to him that had a sharp Sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp Sickle, and gather the Clusters of the Vine of the Earth, for her Grapes are fully ripe; and the Angel thrust in his Sickle into the Earth, and gathered the Vine of the Earth, and cast it into the great Wine-press of the Wrath of God; and the Wine-press was trodden without the City, and Blood came out of the Wine-press, even unto the Horses Bridles, by the space of one thousand and six hundred furlongs.* The intendment of this Scripture is to tell you what the dread of Earthly People shall be, they shall be cut down, and trodden down, and Blood shall come forth, even to the Horses Bridles.

2. In the day of Christs Glory, they that

are

are not *Israel*, though they now escape, shall be cut down without respect of Sex or Age, without respect of greatness or contempt in the World; it is evident from the Word: In *Isa.* 13.17,18. you have a Prophecy concerning *Babylon* of old, which is applicable to *Babylon* still; *Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard Silver, and as for Gold they shall not delight in it; their Bows also shall dash the young men to pieces, and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the Womb, their eye shall not spare Children:* It does intimate to us at what rate Christ will act, when he comes out against them that are none of his; he will neither spare nor pity, have no respect to young or old, nor shall mans being high or low be ought of defence or security to him, *The day of the Lord shall be upon the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon the Oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high Mountains:* the Great Ones of the World shall feel the dread of that stroke.

3. Distress shall attend them within and without, *Job* 15.20,21. *The Wicked travelleth with pain all his days, and a dreadful sound is in his Ears*; the *dreadful sound* is the pangs of their own Consciences, being filled with terror. And this shall be the portion of the World, they shall be filled with dreadful sounds, terrors within; and also miseries

shall

ſhall compaſs them about in every thing, and in every way: *Iſa.* 19. it is ſaid concerning *Egypt*, *They ſhall erre in every work, and ſtagger as a drunken man.*

4. Miſeries ſhall be recompenced upon them ſuitable to the violence done to the Saints, the diſhonour brought to God, and the abuſing of all the patience and forbearance of Chriſt towards them; three ſad ſcores that ſhall be reckoned for in the day of Chriſt. Thoſe that are not *Iſrael*, though they eſcape for a time, they ſhall be dealt withall according to the violence done to the Saints of God: *The violence done to me and to my Fleſh, be upon Babylon, ſhall the Inhabitants of Zion ſay. Iſa.* 51.22,23. *I have taken the cup of trembling out of thy hand* (that is, out of *Zions* hand) *even the dregs of the cup of my fury, thou ſhalt no more drink it again; but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have ſaid to thy Soul, Bow down, that we may go over; and thou haſt laid thy Body as the ground, and as the ſtreet to them that went over.* They ſhall ſuffer too according to the contempt of the Goſpel, and the diſhonour done to Chriſt that way; for he ſhall come to deal with all them that do not know him, and obey not the Goſpel; and alſo according to the ſin of deſpiſing the forbearance of Chriſt. Indeed this day you are eſcaped,

eſcaped, and the patience of Chriſt is exerciſed towards you, but let me tell you, if you ſtand and abide in your ſinful ſtate, you ſhall find that the abuſing of the patience of Chriſt, is but *treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath.*

5. Thoſe that have eſcaped, and not *Iſrael*, they ſhall be compaſſed about with eternal Sorrows, and ſhall never riſe out of them. Says the Church, *Though I fall, I ſhall ariſe again; and though I ſit in darkneſs, yet the Lord ſhall be a light to me: Then ſhall ſhe be confounded* (that is, the Enemies of the Church) *ſhame ſhall cover her.* That will be the portion of every ſinner; though he may eſcape for a ſeaſon, ſhame ſhall cover him, miſery and diſtreſs ſhall abide him for ever.

USE III.

HAving diſpatch'd the Second, I come now to a Third Uſe, (which the former Uſes neceſſarily lead unto.) It is a little to encourage the hearts of poor Sinners, that poſſibly may be full of thoughts and deſires, that they might yet be brought into the number of *Iſrael:* Methinks I do even hear ſome poor heart ſay, *If it be ſo well with them that are Gods Iſrael, and ſo ill with them that are not Gods Iſrael; What is there no hope for me,*

me, though I am yet none of that number? Must I for ever stay in that state of misery in which I am? Must an eternal doom of Misery be entaild upon me? I acknowledge my state is exceeding desperate and sad; but is there no hope in Israel concerning this matter?

To that I answer:

If there be any poor sinner sensible of the misery of his condition, that would gladly make an escape out of it; Soul, be not discouraged, thy condition is not hopeless; but be encouraged, for there is a possibility that as thou hast escaped the dread and misery of this present day, so thou mayst be delivered from that Christless state wherein thou art. There are two Scriptures I would commend to you for this purpose; the first is in *Isa.*44. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords: and another shall call himself by the Name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and sirname himself by the Name of Israel.* The words are both a Prophecy and a Promise, and they do respect the Gentile-World, that were at that time, and long after, in their sins, in their state of estrangement from God; here it is propheſied that yet there should be a flocking into *Israel*, the number of Gods Israel should be greatly aug-

augmented and encreaſed: It is promiſed that God would ſo prevail upon the hearts of ſome poor Sinners that they ſhall come and ſay, *I am the Lords: and ſhall come and ſubſcribe their hands to the Lord, and ſhall ſirname themſelves by the Name of Iſrael:* that God would conquer them ſo far that they ſhould ſee the need they had to be of that number, that they ſhall reſign and give up themſelves to be of the *Iſrael* of God. This is an encouraging word to the Sinner; there is a poſſibility for them that were ſtrangers to come and to name themſelves by the Name of *Jacob*, and ſubſcribing to the Lord, to take up that Name, and ſo partake of the Priviledges of the *Iſrael* of God.

Take another Scripture: *Iſa.* 19. 24,25. *In that day ſhall Iſrael be the third with Egypt and with Aſſyria, even a Bleſſing in the midſt of the Land; whom the Lord of Hoſts ſhall bleſs, ſaying, Bleſſed be Egypt my People, and Aſſyria the Work of my hands, and Iſrael my Inheritance.* The import of the words is this, *Egypt* and *Aſſyria* were ſome of the Enemies of God and his People, at a very great diſtance from him; but here is a Promiſe that they ſhould come to be conquered, and brought into ſubjection to the Lord, and to be baptized into the Spirit of *Iſrael*, to be bleſſed with the Bleſſing of *Iſrael*, they ſhall

ſpeak the Language of *Canaan*, they ſhall be of one Heart and one Lip with the Lords People. Souls, were you as *Egypt*, and were you as the *Aſſyrians*, Enemies to God and his People; were you at the greateſt diſtance from God that could be ſuppoſed; *Egypt* had neither Ordinances nor Priviledges, nor ought elſe that good was, more then the creatures of the Earth, and ſuch-like things; yet the Lord intimates here to us, that they ſhall come to ſhare in and divide a Bleſſing with *Iſrael*. If thy eſtate were as one of them, yet mayeſt thou, as and according to the promiſe made to them, be brought into the number that ſhall ſhare in the Bleſſing of the *Iſrael* of God: Therefore Soul, though now thou art not of *Iſrael*, yet it may be ſaid to thee, *They have obtained Mercy which had not obtained.* This is the kindneſs of God, that he is pleaſed to make bleſſed overtures of Mercy unto poor, vile, and unworthy Sinners. But more then this, for the encouragement of any Soul that may yet be in his Sins, I would ſpeak four or five things: Thy condition is not deſperate, but thou mayſt be brought into the number of the *Iſrael* of God, and ſo partake of the ſame Mercy with them in thy eſcaping this day, if thou doſt conſider,

1. That Gods *Iſrael* came to be the People

ple of God by choice, and through the Grace and Goodneſs of God: *Iſrael* were not born the People of God: He choſe *Abraham* and his Seed from the reſt of the World, to be a peculiar People to himſelf. Hence it is that *Iſrael* often-times are called in Scripture, *Iſrael my* CHOSEN: ſo *Pſal.*105.4. *The Lord hath* CHOSEN *Jacob for himſelf, and Iſrael to be his peculiar Treaſure:* and in *Iſa.*44.1. *Iſrael* is called there the *Choſen* of the Lord; *Yet now hear, O Jacob my Servant, and Iſrael whom I have* CHOSEN: They were choſen meerly from the good pleaſure of God. Choice it is a free Act, in which there is no neceſſity and conſtraint; ſo it was in God a free Act to pitch upon Iſrael, to make them his People: This account the Lord gives of it, *Deut.*4.37. *And becauſe he loved thy Fathers, therefore he* CHOSE *their Seed after them, and brought thee out in his ſight with mighty power:* ſo *Deut.*7.7. *The Lord did not ſet his love upon you, nor* CHUSE *you, becauſe you were more in number then any People, for ye were the feweſt of all People; but becauſe the Lord loved you,* &c. At firſt God did out of his meer accord chuſe *Abraham* and his Seed, and having in love choſen them, he continues his kindneſs and goodneſs to them, that he might keep his Covenant and his Mercy that he promiſed to *A-*

braham. Poor Soul, this I would now say to thee: *Israel* was found out by the Lords Grace, and that Grace may also fix upon thee: It was not any thing that was in *Israel*, but meerly the good pleasure of God that chose them to be his People, and the same Grace of God may chuse thee, and plant thee among his People, and give thee with them a pleasant portion.

2. When God first chose *Israel*, he found them in as wretched and sad a condition as thine can be; thy case cannot be worse then the case of *Israel* was when the Love and Grace of God fixed upon them: *Ezek.* 16. 1. *Thus saith the Lord to Jerusalem, Thy Birth and thy Nativity is of the Land of Canaan; thy Father was an Amorite and thy Mother a Hittite. Canaan* were a People originally without the knowledge of God, in their enmity against God: This, says God, was *Israel* when first I found them; without the knowledge of God, and at as great a distance from God as persons could be: Let the Devil say the worst against thee that he can, he can but say thou art by nature at enmity with God, filled with all the Principles of Sin, and so was *Israel* as well as thou: and that Grace that yet pitied *Israel* in this his low estate, can also reach thy Soul.

3. *Israel* when first God did him good

was

was in as hopeleſs and helpleſs a condition as thine can be: So he goes on, *Ezek.* 16. *And as for thy Nativity, in the day thou waſt born, thy Navel was not cut, neither waſt thou waſhed in water to ſupple thee; thou waſt not ſalted at all, nor ſwadled at all, none Eye piſied thee to do any of theſe unto thee, to have compaſſion upon thee, but thou waſt caſt out in the open field to the loathing of thy perſon in the day that thou waſt born.* What is more helpleſs and ſhiftleſs then an Infant juſt taken from the Womb, not able to do its ſelf the leaſt ſervice? This was *Iſrael*'s condition when the Lord firſt found them, not in a capacity of moving one ſtep out of that wretched, ſinful, corrupt, and rebellious ſtate. And truly to this day the *Iſrael* of God in themſelves conſidered, are altogether unable to act for God and his Glory, but as they are aſſiſted with power from on high. *Iſa.* 45. 24, 25. *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I Righteouſneſs and Strength: even to him ſhall men come, and all that are incenſed againſt him ſhall be aſhamed. In the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and ſhall glory.* *Iſrael* in their beſt ſtate cannot glory in themſelves, nor in any ſtrength of their own, but muſt look upon themſelves as weak Creatures, onely as they are ſtrengthened by the Lord unto any good Word and Work. Soul, this

I would ſay, Thou canſt but be a ſhiftleſs, helpleſs Creature, unable to move a foot forward, or to further thy own Everlaſting Concernments in the leaſt; and this is to be in no worſe ſtate then God found his own People in, and that Grace by which they were brought near to God, can and may alſo work for the good of thy Soul.

4. Conſider further, That the very ſame Promiſes of Mercy are made unto poor ſinners to this day; Promiſes of a part in thoſe very good things which *Iſrael* is poſſeſſed of. All the bleſſings of the Covenant are freely offered and tendred to Sinners to this hour: Hence are all the gracious Promiſes made to the Gentiles up and down the Word of Truth, of which you have more then a few. The firſt of which (as I ſuppoſe) is in *Gen.*9. 27. *God ſhall enlarge Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem, and Canaan ſhall be his Servant:* This is the firſt Promiſe ever made to the Gentiles, and ſome render the word (*Deus alliciet Japhethum*) *God ſhall allure or perſwade Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem: Japheth* is put for the Gentile-World; for by him the Iſles of the Gentiles were inhabited, *Gen.* 10. 2. and 5. compared. You ſhall find if you look in *Luk.*3.36. and downward, Chriſt was of the Race of *Shem*; and the import of the Promiſe

miſe is this, When God ſays he will *perſwaded Japheth to dwell in the Tents of Shem*; he means he will overcome the hearts of the Sinners among the Gentiles, to come to an amity and friendſhip with Jeſus Chriſt; as co-habitation denotes amity, and it is a word full of Grace and Favour as it can hold. But more plain and full is that word, *Gal.* 3. 13,14. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the Law, being made a curſe for us, for it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the Bleſſing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt.* It was the deſign both of the Father and the Son, that all the Bleſſings of the death of Chriſt ſhould reach unto the Sinners among the Gentiles, that what ever Bleſſing was promiſed firſt to *Abraham*, & unto his Seed, the ſame Bleſſing alſo ſhould be made over and given in to every poor ſinner among the Gentiles, that ſhall come and ſubmit themſelves unto the Lord Jeſus. Well then, Is not this greatly for thy comfort? If thou ſayeſt, I am not *Iſrael*; yet here is room and way made for thee: It is the intendment both of Father and Son to let in thy Soul into all the Bleſſings and Mercies promiſed unto the *Iſrael* of God.

5. Conſider this alſo, poo Sinner, if thou art yet in thy ſin and eſtrangement from

God, That it is the real design and intendment of God, both in the Judgement that thou hast seen, and the Escape thou hast had in and under these Calamities, to bring thee among the number of his own People. What is the design of God in all his Controversies with the World? It is to bring them to kiss the Son: the great Controversie is, That People will not take the Yoke of Christ upon them; and therefore sometimes he drives, sometimes he draws, and all means he uses, that he may overcome the hearts of poor Sinners: See the goodness he shews, the mercy he follows them with, in sparing and preserving them, it is to this great end, That his goodness might lead them to repentance, and to a real subjection to the Lord Jesus. Therefore Soul, though thou hast stood long in ways of Rebellion against Christ, yet the Blessings of *Israel* stand open for thee, and the Door of Grace is wide open; be confident if thou dost enter in, close with, and accept of Grace, it will be as well with thee as with any of the *Israel* of God. Consider thy hearty closing with Christ will not onely let thee into Mercy and Blessing of the present Day, but it will let thee into Blessings of all kinds; it will bring a Blessing upon thee in every Work and Way; it will let thee into a part and share in the highest Priviledges

viledges that the Children of Men are capable of: it will let thee into Sonſhip and Friendſhip with the great and holy God: it will make thee bleſſed for Time and for Eternity. Therefore fight not againſt thy own Mercies; mind really and heartily what freeneſs and heartineſs there is in the great God, in ſetting before ſinners all the Grace of the Covenant, and what gladneſs it doth produce when poor Souls are willing to kiſs the Son; it will not onely produce Joy in thy own Soul, it will not onely make glad the hearts of many of thy Relations and of thy Friends, (for poſſibly thou haſt Relations and Friends that long to ſee Chriſt formed in thee, that in every petition at the Throne of Grace their hearts are working for thy Soul, and begging that thou mayſt be a plant of Righteouſneſs of the Lords own planting, and nothing would glad them more then to ſee thee a Son and Heir of the Kingdom of God) but alſo there will be Joy in Heaven; Father, Son, and Spirit are gladded to ſee the deſigns of the death of Chriſt graciouſly accompliſhed upon the hearts of poor ſinners. Remember therefore, I do this day in the Name of Chriſt invite thee to partake of all the Mercies which be the Mercies of Gods *Iſrael*: And truly the Mercies of *Iſrael* are many; there is Pardon, there is Purging,

ging, there is Adoption, Sonſhip, there is the Spirit to comfort you, to lead you in every work and way; there be the Promiſes made over to them, there is mercy now and for ever; A Kingdom the Lord has prepared for them that love him: I invite thee to take a part in theſe things this day, and forget it not, that thou haſt had a Call from the Lord at this time. Soul, I tell thee, if thou doſt ſtand it out againſt this Call of God, truly though thou art eſcaped, and thy life is given thee for a prey, yet thou maiſt poſſibly be ſealed up unto deſtruction, thou maiſt be left to dye in thy ſins, and to fall for ever under the weight of divine diſpleaſure, for thy neglect and contempt of Goſpel-Grace. Be confident as Jeſus Chriſt is now waiting upon poor Souls, and offering Mercy to poor Sinners; ſo when he comes to the glory that is reſerved for him, he will be found of power ſufficient to recompence all that have trodden under foot the Blood of the Son of God, and made light of thoſe overtures of Mercy that have been tendred to them. The Light is now with thee, and the Lord is calling of thee; therefore make peace while thou art in the way, leſt the Lord come forth againſt thee in his hot diſpleaſure.

USE IV.

USE IV.

SOme methinks there are, that are of trembling hearts, and they cry, *It is true, I am eſcaped, but I fear I am none of the Iſrael of God.* My Uſe therefore would be to ſuch as are of trembling ſpirits: When they conſider how good God has been to them, they may poſſibly tremble, leſt at laſt they ſhould loſe the Mercy of this Mercy, becauſe they are not found among the *Iſrael* of God. Many a Soul there is poſſibly cries out, *Iſraels Priviledges are too great for me to hope to have a part in them, and Iſraels Spirit is a Spirit more excellent then ever I have been found in; and therefore though I am eſcaped this day, yet I want that which is the beſt piece of the Mercy of an Eſcape.*

I would anſwer, Know this, O Soul, that among the *Iſrael* of God there are many that are of fearful Spirits: although they are really among the number of the Lords precious Ones, they have not an Eye to ſee it, nor Faith to believe it, and ſo may poſſibly go mourning many days. But what are thy Objections? What makes thee fear? Do not fear thou know'ſt not what, nor why: As we are to give a reaſon of our Hope, ſo I would not have you fear without a reaſon.

Obje-

Objection 1.

Methinks the Soul says, *Gods Israel are a chosen People, and the Election of God lies deep, it is a secret lock'd up in his Bosom, and I fear I have no part in the Election of God: I fear the eternal thoughts of God did not concern themselves about such a weak and worthless Worm as I am.*

Answer.

It is true, the Election of God is a secret in the heart of God, and secret things belong unto God; things written and revealed belong to us: It is not for me or thee to climb Heaven to search Records, and at first dash to turn over the leaves of the Book of Life, and to see whether we may find our Names therein written. It is a great mistake upon which many run, that would think to prove the truth of their being called, by finding out whether they are elected or no; it is an endless, it is an impossible work. This therefore know is thy work and mine, to consult what effects of Electing Love we can finde upon our Souls; if any thing of that be in thy heart, thence thou mayst safely conclude thou wast in the heart of *God* from Eternity. There is a Scripture that answers

anſwers fully (I think) whatever the Soul can ſay in this matter, 1 *Theſ.* 1.4,5. *Knowing, Brethren, beloved, your Election of God; for our Goſpel came not unto you in word but alſo in power, and in the holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your ſake.* Conſider whether the Goſpel hath had its work upon thy heart, whether it hath come with power upon thy Soul; and if ſo, others may know, and thou mayſt know from thence thine Election: Election is an act of God that he paſſeth from Eternity, but Calling is a work and Fruit of Election upon the Soul of a poor Sinner, by which it may come to diſcover that it was in the thoughts of God before the foundation of the World was laid. If therefore thou canſt trace the footſteps of Gods going upon thy Soul, and of his working in a Goſpel-way upon thy heart, thy Soul is ſafe, and the thoughts of God (thou mayſt conclude) were towards thee before thou hadſt a being. But

Objection 2.

The Soul objects, *I fear God hath not been at work upon me: I could conclude Gods election of me, if I could find a work of the Goſpel paſſed upon my Soul. I know the work of the*

the Gospel is to cleanse and purifie the heart; but sin and filthiness dwells in me, that I cannot think the Lord has been effectually at work upon my Soul. That the work of the Gospel is to purifie the heart, is plain from Joh. 17. 17. Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is truth: *so* 1 Pet. 1. 22. Seeing ye have purified your hearts in obeying the Truth thorow the Spirit, unto unfained love, to the Brethren. *The Gospel, if it works, it works to the purifying of the heart.*

Answer.

As it is a work of the Gospel to cleanse and purifie the heart, so it is not all the work it does, nor is it the first work it doth, nor the work that is first manifest upon the Soul. The Law it humbles the sinner, and makes him see his need of Christ: the first work of the Gospel is to give the sinner hope that he may be delivered out of his undone condition; and the next is, to make him willing to subject to and accept of the Grace of God in the Gospel, *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power.* Therefore Soul, if thou dost make this Objection, this I would say to thee; Consider whether thou canst find that the Gospel hath done its first work upon thy heart, hath made thee willing

to

to accept of Grace in the Goſpel-way, and to bow and fall at the foot of Jeſus Chriſt. As to thy Holineſs, the holineſs of thy heart will at firſt diſcover it ſelf hardly by any other ways then by thy love to Holineſs, then by thy hatred of Sin, and thy fighting againſt the Corruptions that be in thy Soul; thy Conqueſt and Victory over Sin muſt be the work of time, the fruit of much pains and long waiting: many excellent Souls have not attained unto this: *Paul* himſelf found impurity remaining, and Corruption like to bear him down; and therefore cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death?* But then

Objection 3.

The Soul objects and ſays, *But I have been but a little time under any Soul-Work, and therefore I may ſoon be miſtaken; I may reckon I am an Iſraelite, and may be but an Edomite ſtill: for it is but a little while that I have had any workings upon my heart. I have gone indeed from Duty to Duty, for a long time together, but I have ſat in and under them like a Stock or a Stone, and moved not: and therefore whether the Workings that are upon me are genuine, or whether they be ſpurious, and not of the right kind, I know not.*

Anſw.

Answer.

I answer therefore: The work of Grace upon the heart is wrought in a little time, a little time doth it: there are indeed many preparations to it, the Soul may fall under many convictions, and many struglings may be in the heart of a poor creature before the new Creature is formed; but Grace is infused into the heart in a moment, at once. It is the Devils design to oppose young Converts, and puzzle them with endless questions about their state: I would therefore that thou shouldst consult for thy satisfaction, which way is the bent of thy Soul: Canst thou say thy desire is for Communion with God, for fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit? Thou wouldst fain see him who is invisible, and fain wouldst know him whom to know is Eternal Life: If the bent of thy heart be really for God, it is bent and bowed; though it hath not been long with God, thou mayest conclude, I think with some comfort, the Lord hath been at work upon thy Soul, and thou art one of the *Israel* of God, though thou art but a little one of that Tribe. But then

Objection

Objection 4.

Says the Soul, *Many of much longer ſtanding, and of much more raiſed confidence, have afterwards miſcarried, and it has appeared that their Souls have not been right with God; and therefore my heart trembles leſt I ſhould not be an Iſraelite indeed.*

Anſwer.

To this I would anſwer, That indeed it is ſo, and it may be thought of with ſorrow of heart, that many Souls after long profeſſion have been but empty Vines, bringing forth fruit onely to themſelves: And *happy is he that by other mens harms learns to beware.* A holy fear and jealouſie over thy heart is very good, and there is great cauſe for it, conſidering the many and great miſcarriages that are among Profeſſors. They ſay of Trees that are well rooted, being ſhaken with the Wind, they are made to root the better: It may be thus may thy Temptations touching thy ſtate be; if thou art rooted in Chriſt, thy Temptations may be for thy further ſetling in thy ſtate. But yet to be always perplexing thy ſelf with queſtions about thy ſtate, may not onely marre thy com-

fort, but may ſpoil thee in thy growth alſo, and may prove a great hindrance to thee: My poor thoughts are therefore theſe, Be ſure to make uſe enough of Chriſt, ſee thy All in him; that he is thy Righteouſneſs for Juſtification, and that from him is the work of thy Sanctification; he muſt begin it, and it is he alſo that muſt carry it on: lie at his foot, live upon him, and let all thy expectations be from him; and whoever may fall, I think thou wilt ſtand, and wilt be found one of the *Iſrael* of God, that ſhall be made glorious in the day of Chriſts Glory. I am perſwaded, if thou canſt do as is hinted in *Iſa.45.ult.* ſee thy Righteouſneſs in him, and thy Strength in him, and canſt glory in *Chriſt*, it is a good ground to thee to hope that thou art of the *Iſrael* of God, with whom it is like for ever to go well.

Objection 5.

The Soul may object and ſay further, *But alas I have had few Viſions of God, and that makes me fear; Iſrael of old had many, and he had ſometimes very glorious Viſions, that did greatly comfort and ſtrengthen, and bear up his Soul.*

Anſw.

Answer.

I answer, That visions of God indeed are exceeding sweet, very sweet, but the dispensing and giving them forth is in the hand of God, and he must do it how and when he pleaseth; and it is good in his sight sometimes to let his own People sit in darkness, and see no light. Hast thou seen the face of God at any time? If thou hast had but some Visions of him, though not so many as thou wouldst, yet it is ground of rejoycing to thee, and thou oughtest from thence to conclude much to thy own comfort: A little hint of Good Will is given in to be lived upon in after times. However, which way is it thy Soul does press? Art thou waiting for the manifestation of the love of God in Christ? Are these the things which thou art seeking of, together with a Conformity to the mind and will of God? If so, thou hast cause of Thankfulness and Joy. Briefly, Watch against those devices of Satan whereby he labours to do thee hurt, and put thee besides thy present proper work. Thou art one of them that are escaped this day, and God expects thy great work should be to give him the glory of that mercy, to improve it to his praise: Satan would possibly divert

thee, and cause thee to make it thy work to perplex thy self about thy state, by raising infinite questions in thee, whether thou art yet of the *Israel* of God, or no. Be not easily thus deluded: but if thou hast ought that may be really a solid ground of hope to thee, do not easily cast away thy confidence; but having got a little hold, keep it, that thou art spared in mercy, and shalt find mercy when Christ shall appear glorious.

USE V.

THe Fifth Use will be to them that are the *Israel* of God, to comfort their hearts: and this Doctrine that is under consideration, is exceeding comfortable unto such; I may truly say to them, I do bring them *glad tidings of great Joy*. What! shall all the sad and dismal Slaughters made in the World, work to such a blessed issue as the Exaltation of Christ? And shall all his glory be for your good? What can you wish for more? When *David* had been speaking of the Kingdom of Christ, and his Glory, under the Person of *Solomon*, in *Psal.72.* it is said, *The Prayers of David the Son of Jesse are ended:* The sum of all that a gracious heart can desire, is, That Christ may be glorified; when that is done, he knows not what more

more to pray for. If you are *Israel*, and your hearts are as they ſhould be, the great thing about which your Spirits are working, is, that *Chriſt* may be ſet upon his Throne, and that his Name may be exalted: If this work go forward, and be in hand, the work that is in hand and goes on, is that which lies moſt upon your hearts, and in which your *Souls* have greateſt occaſion to rejoyce. Let the conſideration of this, comfort you,

1. Againſt whatever Breaches may have been made upon you by this day of ſlaughter; it will be ſtrange if ſome of you have not loſt Friends and Relations: Remember all theſe Breaches made upon you, onely ſerve to repair the intereſt of Chriſt, and work for his glory: and if your hearts be right, what would you not part with, ſo the work of God may be furthered? If your hearts be right, you will ſay, *Let all go, and come what will; if Chriſt may but be a Gainer, I will be willing all things ſhould be loſt.*

2. Let it comfort you under thoſe perplexities, and troubles, and dread, that it may be, hath been upon your Spirits in ſuch a day: Doubtleſs Times of ſlaughter are Times of great ſorrow and grief of heart; but who would not ſuſtain a little grief, for the working out of greater comfort? The firſt ſight that you ſhall have of Chriſt in his

glory, will wipe away these Tears, and will suppress all those Fears; it will make them be as if they had never been.

3. Let it comfort you, if you should see worse things then ever yet you have seen. I do believe many Souls do this day think that nothing can be more terrible then what they have already seen and heard; but if they should be mistaken, and you should see things more dreadful, be comforted; Christs work is going forward, his glory and *Israel's* mercy is upon the wheel. It is not unusual in Scripture and experience, that one Judgement goes not alone, but it is followed by others closely at the heels. *Jer.* 14. 12. *When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer Burnt-Offering & an Oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the Sword, and by the Famine, and by the Pestilence:* Not one single Judgement onely, but others were to go in hand along with it. Christ says, *Luk.* 21.25,26. That a little before the day of his glory, there shall be *distress of Nations, and mens hearts shall fail them for fear, for looking after those things that are coming on the Earth.* It is a very probable conjecture, that as we have seen the distress of a City, we may see the distress of Nations, and troubles may over-spread the face of the whole Earth. Yet if these

things

things should be, remember Christs Counsel to his own Disciples, vers.28. *Look up, and lift up your heads, for your Redemption draweth nigh.* Remember the words of the wise man, *Prov.*3.25,26. *Be not afraid with sudden fear, neither with the desolation of the Wicked when it comes; for the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*

4. Be comforted though you cannot understand the method of God, and are not able to conceive how these Dispensations of God should work for Christs glory, and the good of his People: We are apt to be perplexed because we cann't see into the depths of the proceedings of God, and understand the reason of them all. But remember he that hath the management of these things knows his own ends, and can tell how to accomplish his own designs, and he will be sure to do his own work, when all men have done what they can: Things may and shall work for the good of the Saints, though we cannot understand them. Remember the case of *Jacob*, Gen.42.36. Says *Jacob, Me ye have bereaved of my Children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and will you take away Benjamin also? All these things are against me.* To his apprehension all this made against him; when in truth, and when the issue was

ſeen, it made ſo for him as nothing could do more. And thus it is in the great amazing Diſpenſations of God with which we are ſtartled; though we underſtand not the myſtery and reaſon of Gods proceedings, yet they make for the good of his People, and will work out his glory, though we cry theſe things are againſt us often-times.

5. And laſtly, It will comfort you if you are *Iſrael*, though you ſhould not ſee all accompliſhed immediately, though the Branch of the Lord ſhould not forthwith become glorious; Remember Faith and Patience, they ſerve to help us to wait and ſtay Gods time and leiſure. God always keeps his Ends upon his Heart, and in his Eye, and never acts in any inconſiſtency with them. This is abundantly certain, that he will accompliſh every good thing for his People: *Wait therefore on the Lord, and keep his Way, and he will exalt you in due time.* Though he anſwers your deſires and expectations, for the preſent, by *terrible things*, yet it is *in Righteouſneſs*, and it is for the bringing about whatever mercy he promiſed to his People.

USE VI.

THe laſt Uſe would be for a Word of Counſel. You that are eſcaped this day,

day, and are the *Israel* of God, what mercy is this that you share in? how amazing and distinguishing are the dispensations of God to you-ward! How should the sence of it over-come your Souls! To be preserved, and preserved in mercy, to great and glorious ends, what can you desire more had you been put to make your own terms with God? Believe it, if you are the Lords People in truth, you are much in the heart of God, and your Good in the very next place to his own and his Sons Glory is designed, however he deals with you: If he lets loose men upon you, it is not with a design to hurt you; *Psal.*66.12. *Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads, we went through fire and water; but thou hast brought us out into a wealthy place.* If he comes to thunder down Judgements upon the World, it is with a design to do you good; it is for your safety. *Isa.*43.14. *Thus saith the Lord your Redeemer, the holy One of Israel, For your sakes I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles; and the Caldeans, whose cry is in the Ships.* Christ in all his Administrations, and in all the Dispensations of his Kingly Power from first to last, aims at the good of his People, and it is for their benefit that he acts, however we are apt through blindness and ignorance to interpret it. If he

he cuts down his People, it is to do them good; if he ſpares them it is becauſe he delights in them, and will make them partake of ſparing-mercy. How admirable is the kindneſs of the Lord, and what effect ſhould it have? But

1. To teach you to ſee the hand of Chriſt in all, and to ſing forth the praiſes of the Lord; your preſervation is through Chriſt. When the Paſſeover was inſtituted of old, God bid the *Iſraelites* to *ſprinkle the Blood of the Lamb upon the door poſts, and when the Angel paſſed by to ſlay the firſt-born of Egypt, he would paſs by their doors that were ſprinkled*: If the deſtroying Angel hath paſſed by your Doors, and hath not come in, it is becauſe your poſt was ſprinkled with the Blood of Jeſus, the Blood of the Lamb: It is to *Chriſt* that you own it, and O that the praiſes of the Lord might be ſounded forth by you: in *Pſal.* 22. 3. God is ſaid to *inhabit the Praiſes of Iſrael*; it is a remarkable expreſſion, *O Thou that inhabiteſt the Praiſes of Iſrael, our Fathers truſted in thee, and were delivered. Iſrael* ſhould be a praiſing People, and God delights in their Praiſes: He loves to be where his Praiſes are ſpoken forth. O that your habitations might be the habitations where the Praiſes of God might dwell, and where the goodneſs of God may be ſounded forth.

2. Sure

2. Sure your escaping should make you to be Holiness unto the Lord: Hath the *Lord written you unto Life*, as the expression is in this 4th of *Isaiah*? Are you by his appointment and counsel in the Land of the living? O then see that you be a People walking with him. He says in this 4th of *Isaiah*, to them that do escape, that they shall be a *holy People*, vers. 3. *It shall come to pass that he that is left in Sion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called Holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.* O that every one written among the living this day, might also be called *Holy*, that is, might be so, for God calls things as they are. There be great engagements lie upon our Souls that we live up to this expectation of God.

3. Surely your work is to help forward the glory of Christ and your own good, by all ways you can: Faith and Prayer are the great means by which you may be serviceable to this great end. We are apt to be faithless and unbelieving, when things succeed not according to our desire and expectation; but the work of the Soul is, to wait for the salvation of God, and to believe for the accomplishment of all that the Lord hath spoken; to beg earnestly that God would remember his Promise, that he would do

do according to the Faith of his People: Whatsoever God has engaged himself to his People, that he will do for them, he expects that they should enquire of him for it.

4. How much ought it to be your care to be found in a spirit fit to meet Christ in his glory? There is great talk in the World of what expectations are upon the hearts of the Saints; O that we could see suitable preparations in every Soul, putting off the works of darkness, and pressing after a Spirit of Humility and Holiness, that we might be crucified to the World, and raised up to a spiritual frame: the day of Christs glory will be exceedingly filled up with spiritual things, and a carnal earthly spirit will be loathed and abominable. O then shake off the filth of sin, and the filth of this World, and put on your beautiful Garments, that so you may be prepared to meet the Lord in his glory.

5. Do you much pity Sinners: When Christ shall come in his glory, with what shame and confusion will poor sinners stand? every heart will tremble, and the proudest spirit will then stoop. O pity them now, for then you will have no pity for them: the Righteous shall rejoyce when he sees the vengeance, they will then onely triumph in the righteous Dispensations of God. O pity them

them now, and mourn over them, and pray for them, and pray them into Christ, if possible; and walk so before them that thou maist make them in love with the ways of God: This is your work, the Salvation of Sinners should be much upon your hearts, if you know the worth of your own Souls: And the more there are brought into Christ, the greater will the solemnity be, and the glory of this glorious appearance.

To close all therefore:

It is a sad day for the present, even with the Saints of God; and though we are preserved, yet we and all our mercies lie open to we know not how much misery; we and our best Priviledges, how they may be dealt with we cannot tell: however, of this be confident, That all this time the Lord is at work graciously for his People: As he says in this fourth of *Isaiah*, when he had said in the Text, *The Branch of the Lord should be glorious for them that are escaped*; he addes, vers. 4. *When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the Daughter of Zion.* In the mean time before this glory, the Lord is waning away the filth of his People, and purging out their dross that yet is among them, that when his glorious appearing shall be, you and all your Mercies will at once be delivered

livered: and as he says in the fifth verse, *The Lord will create upon every dwelling place in Mount Zion, and upon her Assemblies, a Cloud and Smoak by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the Glory shall be a defence.* Now we have our Opportunities with hazard, and little Communion with God in them; but at that day there shall be *upon the Assemblies of Mount Zion a Cloud.* The Cloud in the Temple was the token of Gods presence, God will be among his People: *And upon their Glory shall be a defence: They shall be safe from the fear of evil, and God will bless his People with peace; He will bless them out of Zion.*

Laus Deo Opt. Max.

FINIS.

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